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TRILATERAL PARANA RIVER MEETING SET FOR 14 MARCH

PY241548Y Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1555 GMT 24 Feb 78 FY

[Text] Buenos Aires, 24 Feb--A San Martin Palace spokesman reported today that the trilateral meeting of Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay will begin in Asuncion on 14 March 1978.

MARCH MEETING ON AMAZON PACT CONFIRMED

FY231336Y Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 19 Feb 78 p 7 FY

[Excerpt] Itamaraty has confirmed that the second meeting of Amazon countries will take place late in March in Brasilia to continue discussions on the Brazilian proposal to sign an Amazon pact. In recent weeks Itamaraty has kept in touch with the foreign ministries of those countries and half of them have already accepted the date proposed for the meeting.

Contrary to the optimism which preceded the first meeting in November 1977, when Itamaraty had hoped for a general, broad and flexible agreement with those countries by the end of the 3-day meeting, Brazilian diplomats are now looking more realistically at the possibility of signing a pact and admit the need for further multilateral meetings in order to formalize the pact.

At this second meeting Itamaraty is willing to examine a series of amendments to its proposal which delegations attending the November 1977 meeting promised to present. In view of the reactions of those delegations at the November meeting, Itamaraty already has a sketchy idea of the amendments to be presented, but it does not admit that a completely different proposal will be presented.

At the beginning of this year, the Venezuelan Government, which was the last to agree to examine the Brazilian proposal, sent Ambassador Emilio Figueredo from the Amazon problems department of the Yellow House to the Andean Pact member countries for consultation on the Itamaraty proposal. Itamaraty is sure that Ambassador Figueredo's observations will be useful to the Caracas government as the basis for its opinion about the Amazon pact proposed by Brazil.

Brazil Distributes Drafts

FY240222Y Rio de Janeiro JORNAL DO BRASIL in Portuguese 23 Feb 78 p 7 FY

[Text] Brasilia--The Brazilian embassies in Caracas, Lima, Bogota, La Paz, Quito, Georgetown and Paramaribo yesterday received authorization from Itamaraty to distribute to local foreign ministries the new draft copy of the Amazon Pact proposal. This new draft copy includes the changes suggested by common agreement among the representatives of the eight member countries at the first meeting held in Brasilia in December.

This new copy of the regional cooperation treaty, kept secret by Itamaraty, will serve as the basic work document at the second meeting which the Brazilian Government will promote at the end of March with its seven members, also in Brasilia.

NEWSPAPERS EXAMINE PINOCHET'S PUERTO MONTT SPEECH

PY230053Y Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1250 GMT 22 Feb 78 PY

[Text] Buenos Aires, 22 Feb--Buenos Aires newspapers today continue to analyze in their editorials the scope and effect at the official level of the speech made in Puerto Montt by Chilean President Augusto Pinochet shortly after the signing of the agreement [regarding the Beagle issue].

CLARIN noted in this regard that no official declarations have been issued nor will there be by any in the next few days. Official Argentine circles are reportedly waiting for the start of the negotiations of the first joint negotiating commission, which will hold its first meeting in Santiago on (?) March, before issuing any definitive conclusions.

For its part, LA OPINION, in an extensive commentary by Andres Ruggeri entitled "In Serious Negotiation Only the Act Is Important and Everything Else Is Secondary," states that Pinochet's speech was contradictory and that this is the least that can be said to describe it. He adds that the speech contradicted the essence of the act and that Pinochet's forms and procedures violate the most elemental diplomatic rules. Ruggeri adds: "But the act is signed and through it the two governments committed themselves to hold negotiations. There was good reason to believe that through this commitment the two countries had arrived at a principle of agreement. But now this is not true anymore, since this belief was shattered by the unprecedented attitude shown by the Chilean president." He adds that "such an unexpected change of attitude [by Pinochet] lacks any justification unless one considers that he may be having problems in his domestic policy and that this led him to adopt such an extreme and unprecedented attitude." LA OPINION adds: "Argentina must now find out what the true motives were which led the Chilean president to deliver such a contradictory speech. If the motive of this speech was domestic problems, it will be forgotten and will become one more page among the many questionable documents which were written in this stage of the dispute regarding the southern region. If, however, this speech is a preview of the Chilean position in the bilateral negotiations, the possibilities of arriving at an agreement would be considerable reduced."

For his part, Enrique Alonso, CLARIN's special correspondent, after noting that, in the present negotiations with Chile, there is a difference between theory and what is enforced later, notes that if the Chilean negotiators follow the rigid position announced by President Pinochet, the reduction of tension which is sought in the southern region will be difficult to achieve simply because of the advances made by Chile in the region. Regarding the time which the binational commissions will take to submit their studies, Alonso wonders: "How to fill this available time?" To this he says that alternative courses of action must be enforced during this time. Alonso notes that comments on the issue should be made in adequate international forums, primarily at the UN General Assembly, where perhaps the foreign minister himself should be the speaker. He adds that a necessary and possible course of action for Argentina is that of publicly charging Chile with making illegal advances in the disputed region (issuance of a base line decree, appointment of coastal wardens).

He adds that this action is necessary because it will markedly improve the country's image abroad and it is possible because our bilateral negotiations with Chile cannot prevent us from taking this step, especially considering that in the surprising speech he delivered in Puerto Montt, on signing the act of principle of agreement in the presence of his host, General Videla, President Augusto Pinochet was in fact contradicting the contents of the instrument for negotiations.

MASSERA COMMENTS ON DISPUTE WITH CHILE

Interview with JORNAL DO BRASIL

PY230044Y Rio de Janeiro JORNAL DO BRASIL in Portuguese 21 Feb 78 p 12 PY

[Adm Emilio Massera's undated interview with JORNAL DO BRASIL correspondent Aluizio Machado in Buenos Aires]

[Text] [Question] What could you tell us about rumors published in the Washington POST that the navy commander could be an alternative for the current president?

[Answer] General Videla, General Agosti and I--who are members of the military junta--feel bad every time that, shielded by freedom of the press, slanders and offenses are aimed at us. Thank God, our solid personal friendship prevents any of us from harboring the slightest doubt about our intentions.

[Question] What could be the aim pursued with the publication of such rumors and what would be the intention behind those rumors?

[Answer] We have two kinds of enemies: the international subversives and those who want to prevent Argentina from becoming a dynamic, stable and modern democracy. The first ones try to destroy the state while the others try to stunt our development and creativity, keeping us in a passive state in which we will not pose any competition to the world powers which, by the way, are showing some symptoms of decadence already. Those two enemies act separately or jointly according to circumstances and they have been trying for some time already to crack the unity of the armed forces, which are guaranteeing both order and growth in the country. Neither General Videla, Lieutenant General Agosti nor I are anything but persons leading the nation's reorganization process for a length of time established in the revolutionary decrees which are the legal basis of our regime. We are only temporary, but the unity of the armed forces is permanent and indestructible. Therefore, any slanderous ploy in order to divide us is nothing but a waste of time.

[Question] They are saying abroad that you are preparing a trip to the United States to talk with President Carter. Is this true?

[Answer] I have no plans.

[Question] Are there any disagreements between the navy and the economic authorities over economic policies as rumors have it?

[Answer] An economic and financial system which has been decaying for decades cannot be put back in shape without causing pains, and the Argentine people are cooperating with admirable endurance.

To revamp the economy we have to make efforts we were not used to making, but which were necessary in order to change a structure based on privileges.

[Question] Why are you in favor of the so-called fourth-man plan?

[Answer] We have all been in favor of that scheme ever since the armed forces decided to oust the previous government. Now we are only talking about the date in which that plan should become effective. Taking into consideration that we are living under exceptional rules, the question is no more complicated than to steer the process through the institutional path previously laid down.

[Question] Whenever the time for a political solution comes around, will the present navy commander participate directly in an active role?

[Answer] When the time comes for a political solution, the direct participation and active role of 25 million Argentines is to be expected since the whole country has risen to its feet at the appropriate time. Indifference is nonexistent in Argentina.

[Question] Both parties seem to assume rigid positions in the conflict with Chile. What does the Argentine Navy think about that conflict?

[Answer] The navy as well as the other branches of the armed forces are absolutely convinced that the cause defended is just. We are not going to tolerate territorial mutilations or accept unjustified changes in the maritime limits under our sovereignty. Brazil, which has extensive coasts on the South Atlantic, can easily understand our position.

[Question] How do you view the relations with Brazil and the development of the River Plate Basin--questions which seem to raise some disagreements?

[Answer] Considering the level of Brazil's and Argentina's political maturity and sophistication, I am sure that there are no differences of opinion which are not amenable to solutions through sincere and well-meaning dialog. Both nations are fully conscious of their responsibility to provide an example for other Latin American nations.

[Question] How do you view relations with the United States since President Carter has given priority to his human rights policy?

[Answer] The worst aggression against human rights was that nihilistic subversion which tried to take over our country. We engaged in a war to defend our human rights and today we can say that insecurity, fear, kidnappings, attacks and bombings are becoming only bad memories in Argentina. Any man of good faith can understand what we have done.

[Question] The international press carries accounts of human rights violations on the part of those who are engaged in the antiradical war in Argentina. What can you tell us about this?

[Answer] I can't deny that part of the international press has painted that smeared image of Argentina which should not be taken seriously lest one become an accomplice in treason against the Argentine nation.

[Question] Some Brazilians are concerned over missing persons--two French nuns recently and an Argentine diplomat some time ago--whose whereabouts the government has still been unable to discover. Do you have some explanation for those countries which show concern over such cases?

[Answer] All those cases are being investigated very conscientiously, because we believe in the dignity of human beings. Undoubtedly the diplomat was the victim of subversives. Could we think of something else? Only the subversive propaganda would induce one to think otherwise. As for the nuns, the government is doing everything possible to find out the truth. Of course, there are many missing persons and, in many cases, we discovered that some of them had only fled the country with the assistance of terrorist organizations or that they had been murdered to keep them from turning themselves in or to keep them from becoming informers. With the approval of the navy, the Argentine Government is releasing the list of prisoners. Those who are not on that list have either died in shootouts with the police and were not identified by their own colleagues, or they have been killed on orders from subversive courts, or they have fled the country with false papers.

[Question] It has been said repeatedly that antisubversive operations could be counted on a single hand. Could we know something about this?

[Answer] The repression of terrorism is in the hands of the legal authority. If there is any other parallel activity, it must be considered to be terrorist activity also, whatever its political color. The legal authority is in our hands and we denounce as subversive any other kind of activity along the same line. You can understand that we cannot be responsible for the recklessness of illegal gangs. I presume that Brazil, which is acquainted with the activities of the so-called death squad, is in a position to understand us.

[Question] Can you say that the armed forces have won the fight against subversion and terrorism?

[Answer] Not completely. The subversive organizations have lost their leaders, because they have been jailed or died in armed clashes which have been duly reported or they have fled the country. As long as there remains a lunatic on the loose to place bombs or to shoot somebody, our fight will not be over. But looking in another direction, today we Argentines think more about the future than about our daily troubles. The challenge beckoning us is our great destiny, and we are determinedly moving in that direction.

'Time Running Out'

PY231733Y Buenos Aires Domestic Service in Spanish 1030 GMT 23 Feb 78 PY

[Text] Rio Grande, [Argentina]--The whole country is looking toward the south, with the certainty that the government of the armed forces will not trade away the dignity and assets of the Argentines. Navy Commander in Chief Emilio Eduardo Massera made this statement during a ceremony at which the 1st Infantry Battalion relieved the 2d Battalion. He added: For too long Argentina has been the loser. Our generosity has been taken for weakness for too long. We love peace, but peace ceases to be moral when its price is justice and the law.

Today's Argentina, united as never before, knows that the armed forces will not allow good faith to be misunderstood. The units of the army and the air force and those making up the navy are ready to accomplish the mandate of the nation, which no longer allows misunderstandings. We know that our military potential will serve reason but never aggression, since as a mature people we will not let ourselves be led into childish fits of passing emotion. Massera concluded: This makes our belief stronger, our resolution firmer and deeper. Nobody should disregard this. We are running out of time for talks.

VIOLA: NATION SEEKS TO AVOID WAR WITH CHILE

PY251308Y Santiago Chile Radio Minería Network in Spanish 0930 GMT 25 Feb 78 FY

[Text] Callao, Peru--Argentina does not want to cause a military conflict with Chile over the Beagle Channel dispute. This statement was made in Callao by Gen Roberto Viola, Argentine Army chief of staff, who is officially visiting Peru. Viola also stated that trade, diplomatic and other relations between Argentina and Chile are absolutely normal and not cool.

LA PRENSA CRITICAL OF TODMAN'S NEW YORK SPEECH

PY211944Y Buenos Aires LA PRENSA in Spanish 18 Feb 78 p 4 FY

[Editorial: "U.S. Continental Policy"]

[Text] In a speech given before an important audience in New York, Terence A. Todman, U.S. assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, has made an evaluation of the hemispheric policy of his country since President Carter assumed power.

In this connection he defined the human rights campaign as the "foundation stone" of action in the hemisphere, reasserted the dedication of his government to the defense of individual rights, and appealed for more attention to economic needs.

Regarding the importance of relations with Latin American countries, he mentioned that they supply 17 percent of U.S. petroleum requirements, while U.S. exports to Latin America have more than trebled lately, from \$5 billion to \$18 billion per year. He also observed that drugs totaling more than \$4 billion in value enter his country illegally from Latin America and that their consumption harms millions of people and undermines social life in thousands of communities. He mentioned that his country's investments in the region exceed \$23 billion.

After pointing out omissions and mistakes in the policy followed earlier by the United States, he stated that the United States has now recognized that Latin America is a group of nations with individual goals, and that their aspirations and their importance in the community of nations vary.

Referring to the Panama Canal treaties, now in the process of ratification by the Congress of his country, he asserted that the ratification would confirm a basic principle of President Carter's--that the United States recognizes and is determined to respect the national sovereignty and independence of other states. He added that nonintervention alone is not a basis upon which fruitful relations can be built and should be complemented by practices which recognize that.

Perhaps the most important part of his speech was his statement that the main problem for the United States "lies in developing a foreign policy responding essentially to human, not merely government, concerns," and that "the dilemma, which is as easy to explain as it is difficult to solve, is to find a way to promote respect for individual dignity and freedom, development of democratic institutions and satisfaction of basic economic needs, without interfering in the internal affairs of nations, and at the same time maintaining the forms of constructive cooperation which are needed to reach the pursued objectives."

He dwelled for a long while upon this subject, stressing that "the enhancing of human rights is a basic principle of President Carter's foreign policy" and that this is the reason why he has told all countries "that the nature of our relations with them will depend on their practices in the field of human rights," and that in doing so he is not "interfering in their internal affairs, but determining the conduct of (the United States) itself, in response to what is seen."

The above quotes have been given in order to convey a general idea of U.S. foreign policy. The quote in the preceding paragraph particularly illustrates the essential contradiction, rather than the difficulty, involved in that policy. The fact that a state conditions its relations with another equally sovereign state on the treatment which the latter gives its own citizens implies an inadmissible interference by the former in the internal affairs of the latter. This is particularly the case when the state conducting such a foreign policy is incomparably more powerful and influential than the other and the latter needs cooperation from the former in vital fields; at that point, not only are the principles and laws guiding relations between nations violated, but pressure is also put on the government by trying to impose decisions which are properly internal policy and which only that government has a right to evaluate and to implement. The speaker, probably with the good intentions which are characteristic of the ingenuousness and lack of knowledge shown by many U.S. rulers regarding Latin America, finally lapsed into an increasingly confused presentation of concepts and a clear contradiction between irreconcilable objectives.

In the speech we have examined, an attempt was made to soften its impact by saying that it is also necessary to avoid believing that only the opposition to governments tells the truth; that it should not be presumed that U.S. officials know more about another society than its own citizens; that no guidelines should be prescribed without assuming responsibilities; that it is necessary to avoid exposing a country to ridicule by insulting its national pride; and that one must not single out some violations while omitting others, because "selective" morality ceases to be moral. The conclusion of what we have said is that, apart from the success or advantage which President Carter's policy may have gained for the United States, which is a thing of interest for its citizens, we cannot refrain from mentioning that the human rights campaign, as conducted by the U.S. Government, injures the rights of nations and also does not recognize the need they have of gaining the upper hand against violence and terrorism.

LABOR CENTRAL REFUSES TO RECOGNIZE COORDINATORS' AUTHORITY

PY240205Y La Paz Radio Cruz del Sur Network in Spanish 2330 GMT 23 Feb 78 PY

[Text] The Bolivian Labor Central [COB], the largest workers union in Bolivia, today stated that it would not recognize any board of directors elected under the control of labor coordinators, much less any board whose candidates were coordinators. (Rene Higuera), secretary general of the COB, said, "We advocate the principle that the local workers are the ones who should elect the board they see fit." The statement was made because some board of directors recently formed through elections directed by coordinators had asked to be recognized by the COB--something which is hardly viable, according to our sources.

The Mineworkers Federation of Bolivia [FSTMB], headed by Juan Lechin, warned that the Siglo XX mining district is about to erupt in a conflict which could have unfortunate results for the mining industry, if the labor coordinators do not leave their directorial posts. These coordinators, supported by force, have provocatively said that they will not leave their union posts and that they will continue to represent workers in talks with management despite their rejection by the rank-and-file, according to the miners' communique.

Most of the labor coordinators named by the Labor Ministry are accused of serving the government to enhance their own interests. Not long ago, the mining sector protested against the members of the national mining committee who had received a loan from the Mining Corporation of Bolivia [COMIBOL]. It is still not known what the money was used for.

MINERS DISMISSED FOR POLITICS REHIRED

PY221703Y Paris AFP in Spanish 1531 GMT 22 Feb 78 PY

[Text] La Paz, 22 Feb--The state mining enterprise has rehired 78 miners who were dismissed 18 months ago for political reasons, it was reported here today. The rehiring of workers was one of the demands of the 1,383 hunger strikers throughout the country who, for 21 days in January 1978, requested the government to grant complete amnesty, among other things.

The government met most of the demands of the fasters but has not yet removed troops from the mining districts where they were stationed.

NATIONAL FOREIGN DEBT REACHES \$2.5 BILLION

PY221847Y Paris AFP in Spanish 1505 GMT 22 Feb 78 PY

[Text] La Paz, 22 Feb--The Bolivian foreign debt increased by five times in the last seven years, going from \$524 million in 1970 to \$2.51 billion in 1977, it was officially announced in La Paz today. Government specialists explained that this rapid increase is a result of the accelerated process of national development. The government maintains that the present \$2.51 billion foreign debt is within acceptable levels considering that national exports reached \$680 million in 1977. The officials, however, have begun a process of economic austerity, since government sources admit that the present foreign debt is one factor for pressure on the present stability of the Bolivian peso. The yearly amortization and interest payments on the foreign debt during 1970-1977 have been kept below 23 percent of the total exports.

O GLOBO SKEPTICAL ABOUT NUMBER OF EXILES

PY230200Y Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 18 Feb 78 p 1 PY

[Editorial: "The Truth About the Exiles"]

[Text] The political opening process has its foes disguised under the cloak of democratic fervor and magnanimity: those, for example, who take advantage of the growing freedom of information to spread false reports, or distorted facts, most often trying to create obstacles to the calm development of the government's liberalization project.

There is the case, for example, of the recent, much-publicized rumor that there are approximately 10,000 Brazilians abroad, banished by the revolution, Brazilians who had been pushed aside, living under inadequate living conditions, unable to get a job, not being allowed to return to their country or even to record the birth of their children. They would be, therefore, doomed to their status of stateless persons [apatricidas]. All of this, for many reasons, constitutes a case of flagrant violation of human rights by our government abroad.

That colossal and magic number suddenly appeared: 10,000 exiles, and not less, a statistic aimed at leaving no room for doubts, by its volume, as to the exceptional dimensions and furor of revolutionary discretion in Brazil. And then, following the chimerical census of the exiles, there came condemnatory ideas and proposals for solutions through amnesty. It was not known who took the trouble of making the impressive count, but that is not very important. What is important now is to grant amnesty to those 10,000, to bring them back to the nation and to worthy living standards.

The officials gave an answer to the falseness of the numbers and to the reported restrictions on Brazilians "who live abroad allegedly for political reasons, whether they had their political rights suspended or not." The government answer says: "They have voluntarily chosen that status and will remain in that condition only if they want to."

The note specifies: "The truth is that only 128 Brazilians who had been banished are not allowed to return to the country. They left the country after some actions of political terrorism and in exchange for the freedom of some ambassadors from friendly countries."

In addition to the undesirable presence of the terrorist, the question now concerns the presence of the Brazilian who exiled himself either to escape trials or sentences given by the revolutionary justice. He can return--and many have done so--to exercise here his right to defend himself. The government assures in its note that the consulate will provide, at any time, his "nationality certificate" to return to the country. But while he is abroad his children have the right to be certified, and they regularly receive passports. As far as working is concerned, it is independent from the passport--no matter where they are--because the passport is only a travel document and does not grant or withdraw the nationality of the owner.

In the name of the 128 persons who were really banished for terrorist actions which are publicly known, both internally and internationally, it is intended to create an image of a denaturalized regime which maintains in exile a multitude of political foes. This anti-Brazilian campaign does not mention the self-exiles who one day decided to face the supposed risks of returning and are now enjoying normal life in the fatherland.

Between the proposals for a "broad and unrestricted amnesty" and some broad and unrestricted lies regarding those for whom pardon is requested, or those who may be forgotten, there seems to exist a close kinship. Fortunately, falsehood does not last long, especially when a welcome process of democratic opening frees it to move around and show its nature.

OFFICIAL CONFIRMS 1-YEAR DELAY IN ANGRA PLANTS

PY231353Y Rio de Janeiro JORNAL DO BRASIL in Portuguese 22 Feb 78 p 4 PY

[Text] Licinio Seabra, president of Furnas Electric Company, said yesterday that the present 1-year delay in the completion of Angra II and III will not be eliminated. According to the original timetable, the two plants should have started operation in 1983 and 1984, but the new time estimate is for 1984 and 1985.

Seabra, who will accompany President Geisel to the FRG representing the energy sector, said that the "possibility of discussing FRG financial assistance for the nuclear program has not been rejected."

The Furnas president said that the delay will not be eliminated because financial resources are lacking to complete all the work which must be done. He stated that it is difficult to determine the amount of resources needed for Angra because the resources for Furnas--the ELETROBRAS [Brazilian Power Companies Inc] subsidiary which is in charge of the construction of the three plants--"are budgeted in a lump sum which is to be distributed for several projects, including some hydroelectric projects."

Seabra reported that to implement the 1978 program Furnas will need to invest 12.5 billion cruzeiros. ELETROBRAS has not made the specific allotment of resources for the overall 1978 program. In 1977, Furnas requested close to 10 billion cruzeiros and received only 6 billion cruzeiros. Seabra said that the company intends to curtail its 1978 projects to accommodate the shortage of resources.

Regarding the power transmission lines which Furnas is to install for Itaipu, Seabra said that the cost for the five lines--three to carry alternate current and two, direct current--was estimated at \$1.3 billion in 1977 but that cost was later estimated to have gone up to \$2 billion. But the later estimate was made before it was decided to install two direct current lines, which involves more expensive technology and equipment than for alternate current.

NUCLEAR EQUIPMENT NOW BEING MADE DOMESTICALLY

PY231948Y Rio de Janeiro JORNAL DO BRASIL in Portuguese 19 Feb 78 p 23 PY

[Text] Contracts for participation by NUCLEBRAS Heavy Equipment Inc [NUCLEP] in the manufacture of heavy nuclear plant components covers reactor frameworks, auxiliary structures, vapor generators, pressurizers and batteries with 55 percent Brazilian-made parts--a fact which has been registered with the Foreign Trade Department of the Bank of Brazil [CACEX].

The contract involves \$78,965,200 (860 million cruzeiros at the current exchange rate) worth of equipment. This marks NUCLEP's initiation into manufacturing equipment for the nuclear program, with the aim of increasing the percentage of Brazilian made components while absorbing foreign know-how.

Other pieces of equipment which have to be manufactured under the agreement and their dateline for delivery are the following:

1. A heavy parallel lathe [torno] capable of paring to a diameter of 600 mm on the carrier and to a diameter of 1,000 mm on the suspension bar [barramento], and of working on a 7,000-mm-long piece; it has a 75-kw main motor; and it costs \$622,000. This machine will be used to make axes of austenitic alloys [iron-chromium-nickel corrosion resistant alloys] to a high degree of accuracy (HS) [unidentified unit]. This machine should be ready by April 1980.
2. A mandril lathe with a 180- to 200-mm spindle diameter, a 4.5-m vertical displacement and 6.0-m horizontal displacement. It has a 75-kw main motor; and it costs \$1,932,000. This machine should be ready for work by October 1979.
3. A table-type mandril lathe, with a 260-mm spindle diameter; 2 m of both vertical and horizontal displacement; a 40-kw main motor; and a cost of \$942,000. This machinery should be ready for operation in February 1979.

SIMONSEN DISCUSSES BANK LIQUIDITY SITUATION

PY232214Y Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 21 Feb 78 p 23 FY

[Text] Brasilia--Finance Minister Mario Henrique Simonsen asserted yesterday that the National Monetary Council will not study any measure to control the means of payment (paper money in the hands of the people and bank deposits) because "they are behaving just right." On reporting that the rediscount of liquidity in the beginning of the past week reached 13 billion cruzeiros, having dropped to 8 billion cruzeiros by the middle of the week and to 6 billion by Friday, the minister admitted that some banks were using that resource to pay loans.

Yesterday the level of receipts [recebimento] must have reached "very high peaks" because telephones in Rio de Janeiro were still out of order, making exchange between banks very difficult. For this reason the banks' safes were "full," as were the clearing department [carteira de compensacao] for Bank of Brazil checks. But according to Simonsen, this does not affect the financial system very much, because as soon as the operations become normal, both the safes of private banks and the Bank of Brazil department will return to normal levels and the rediscount will drop.

The finance minister confirmed that the meeting of the National Monetary Council, set for tomorrow, will basically study changes in agricultural credit operations, and will check the study of the Equity Shares Commission [CVM] which proposes a regulation of pension funds.

SEVEN COMMUNIST PARTY MEMBERS SENTENCED

PY230140Y Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 21 Feb 78 p 8 FY

[Excerpts] Brasilia--The Superior Military Court yesterday charged seven persons with making subversive propaganda in Rio de Janeiro as members of the Brazilian Communist Party, and sentenced them to 12 to 15 months imprisonment. The persons who were sentenced for violating Article 45 of the National Security Law (for making subversive propaganda) are: Orlando Magalhaes Pontes, Elson Violante, Sergio Athayde Silva, Nilton Lucas Caparelli, Ana Maria Goncalves Mandin, Antonio Alberto de Souza and Francisco Carneiro da Silva.

GOVERNMENT TO COOPERATE WITH U.S. IN LETELIER PROBE

PY231927Y Santiago Chile Domestic Service in Spanish 1630 GMT 23 Feb 78 PY

[Excerpts] Gen Enrique Valdes, Chilean deputy foreign minister, has reiterated the Chilean Government's willingness to cooperate with the U.S. Government to investigate the assassination of Orlando Letelier. General Valdes stated that the Chilean Government is awaiting the arrival of the appropriate legal document regarding the questioning of two alleged Chilean military officials who reportedly entered the United States with official Chilean passports. According to reports from Washington, these persons are allegedly involved in the attack against Letelier.

A report issued by the U.S. Embassy in Santiago states that the Chilean Foreign Ministry provided official passports to the mentioned individuals. In this regard, General Valdes reiterated that the Chilean Government did not issue any comment in this regard because it lacked reliable details. [Valdes--begin recording] I once again repeat what has already been reported, that the Chilean Government delivered a formal diplomatic note through our ambassador to the United States in which it offered complete cooperation with the U.S. Government to clearup any details regarding the murder of Orlando Letelier and that (?it was of utmost importance) to the Chilean Government for these issues to be completely settled. [end recording]

It was learned from the embassy that the legal request has not been submitted. Immediately after this document arrives, it will be submitted to th Supreme Court president.

EL MERCURIO FAULTS ARGENTINE 'THEATRICAL CAMPAIGN'

PY231753Y Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 1445 GMT 23 Feb 78 PY

[Text] Santiago, Chile, 23 Feb--In its editorial, the newspaper EL MERCURIO said today that Argentine press interpretations of President Pinochet's Monday speech in Puerto Montt were part of "a theatrical campaign of opinion." The editorial states that the press is trying to "to handle events in terms which are sometimes far from the truth."

EL MERCURIO noted: "Argentine circles are only acting surprised so that they can misinform the public about the nature of the problem Argentina caused when it rejected the decision." It added: "Argentina does not seem to understand the Chilean position, which is based on unquestionable rights. Argentina was therefore led to believe in naive press rumors assigning to the Mendoza negotiations nonexistent objectives which no Chilean president could ever support."

Finally, the editorial stated: "The cordial greeting which President Videla sent to his Chilean colleague last Monday on leaving Chilean territory, and the routine establishment in the two countries of the two commissions which must start work next week, are enough to conclude that the "surprise" and "annoyance" of Argentine circles have limited influence and that this is a theatrical campaign of opinion in an attempt to handle the events in terms which are sometimes far from the truth and from the historical tradition of two nations which must live and develop in peace."

REPORTAGE, COMMENTARY ON PROGRESS OF PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

Results Will Be Respected

PA270427Y Madrid EFE in Spanish 0033 GMT 27 Feb 78 PA

[Text] Bogota, 26 Feb (EFE)--President Alfonso Lopez Michelsen said tonight that his government will respect the results of the elections held in Colombia today and will bow to the popular will. In a speech to the people, Lopez Michelsen appeared pleased with the development of the electoral process which culminated today in the election to the legislature and other public bodies.

"My mission as president and my commitment to the country were none other than to conclude successfully the first electoral process after 20 years in which the parties again enjoy the full scope of democratic institutions, without the system of parity and alternation," said the president. The president stated 2 hours after the closing of the elections (held between 1300 and 2100 GMT) that he was very satisfied to see how the elections were carried out "without incident and in a climate of full guarantees." He repeated that today's election results are not a plebiscite "in favor or against the government."

"The single fact that without fraud or coercion any one of the groups which participated could become the winner after the votes are counted is cause for satisfaction for the president of the republic, who understands democracy to be the possibility for different alternatives to reach the public institutions and the government," he said. He added that this is satisfactory without any of the alternatives" assuming an official character." Lopez Michelsen said that in the next few hours the National Civil Registry, an organization separate from the executive branch and independent of the government, will make known the choices of the people.

The president pointed out that the government which he presides over respectfully bows to the will of the people in answer to those choices. After his speech, Lopez Michelsen presided over a cabinet meeting to analyze the results of the elections, emphasizing the peaceful and civic spirit which guided the Colombian people to convert it into a joyous festival of faith in democracy.

Liberals Leading Early Returns

PA270233Y Paris AFP in Spanish 0207 GMT 27 Feb 78 PA

[Text] Bogota, 26 Feb (AFP)--Former Foreign Minister Julio Cesar Turbay Alaya appeared to be gaining ground tonight as sole candidate of the Colombian Liberal Party over his principal opponent, Carlos Lleras Restrepo, according to partial figures divulged here. Based on partial results from eight large cities including Bogota, Turbay is leading 53,992 to 25,347 votes over Lleras in the legislative elections held in Colombia today. Former Liberal President Lleras is leading in Bogota.

On the other hand, the Conservative Party is lagging considerably behind the Liberal Party. Initial results give former President Misael Pastrana 19,894 votes and former presidential candidate Alvaro Gomez 17,768 votes. It will be recalled that the Liberal Party has traditionally held a majority over the Conservative Party, the two traditional Colombian political parties.

Calm Electoral Situation Reported

PA252222Y Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 1730 GMT 25 Feb 78 PA

[Text] Bogota--A climate of tense expectation but total calm prevails today in the country on the eve of one of the most dramatic and decisive democratic elections in recent years, particularly for the Liberal Party. The two traditional political parties, bitterly divided, will test their electoral strength in a contest in which all political sectors are participating actively.

At noon today the government announced that the situation is normal, but noted that tension is evident in the Atlantic Coast departments, where special measures have been taken to stop the buying and selling of votes. The dry law continues in effect throughout the country.

Government Minister Alfredo Araujo Grau this morning said that all the governors, intendants and police officials told him everything was peaceful. Communications Minister Sara Ordóñez de Londoño will be in her office all day to attend to her work. San Carlos Palace reports indicate the situation is normal throughout the country on the eve of the elections. President López Michelsen has been in permanent contact throughout the morning with his ministers and some governors.

Explosion Reported in Popayan

PA242143Y Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 1730 GMT 24 Feb 78 PA

[Text] Popayan--The Ospinist-Pastranist [Conservative] political headquarters in this capital was partially destroyed early this morning by a powerful bomb. This is the fifth terrorist bombing this year in Popayan. The other bombings were against the Liberal Party headquarters, the homes of Josefina Muñoz de Angulo and Senator Víctor Mosquera Chaux, respectively, and in two other buildings. No one has been arrested so far in connection with these incidents.

Turbay, Lleras Offices Bombed

PA252038Y Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 1730 GMT 25 Feb 78 PA

[Text] Two marines and two civilians were seriously injured today during a disturbing wave of terrorism which shook the town of Corozal in Sucre. Extremists detonated a bomb early this morning in the headquarters of the supporters of Turbay Ayala. The violent explosion destroyed doors, windows and furniture and injured two persons.

Around noon, a second bomb exploded at the headquarters of the followers of Lleras Restrepo. Two marines on guard in the area were hit by splinters from the device and had to be hospitalized. The governor of Sucre, Ramiro Torres Vergara, went to Corozal at noon accompanied by the chief of the Department of Administrative Security [DAS] and the presidential delegate in order to begin investigations, according to Orlando Benítez, RCN director in Sucre.

So far, no movement has claimed credit for the bombings. Vigilance in Corozal was reinforced by 15 marines sent from the base at (Covena). The governor of Sucre, Ramiro Torres Vergara, today condemned the series of terrorist attacks which were launched against the headquarters of political groups in Corozal and warned that there will be a thorough investigation. The governor said that these attacks are isolated incidents which do not endanger the elections.

[begin recording] These are regrettable incidents which have caused us much concern. I wish to say that early this morning, at approximately 0030, a bomb exploded in Liberal Party headquarters in Corozal, which fortunately did not cause great property damage. Unfortunately, approximately 45 minutes ago, another bomb exploded in the Llerist headquarters in Corozal. One marine was seriously injured and is being treated at the city hospital. Such things have never before occurred in Sucre. [end recording]

Governor Ramiro Torres Vergara personally took charge of the investigations into the terrorist attacks. Authorities in Medellin have increased guards at the various headquarters of political parties which operate in the city as a result of the terrorist attacks which took place against these offices.

RCN was told that investigations into the attack on the Lleras headquarters this morning are being carried out by local authorities in order that those responsible may receive exemplary punishment. Atonio Duque Alvarez, secretary of government of the department, has said that army units and secret agents will carry out regular patrols around the party headquarters in Medellin to prevent other such incidents.

In another quarter, the office of the governor of Antioquia has announced that everything is ready for tomorrow's elections, since all preparations are being carried out as scheduled. It was also said that there is complete calm and that so far there have been no incidents in the municipalities of Sonson, San Carlos and Apartado, where protest movements recently took place.

Guerrillas Stage Attacks

PA251740Y Madrid EFE in Spanish 1220 GMT 25 Feb 78 PA

[By Libardo Sanchez]

[Excerpts] Bogota, 25 Feb (EFE)--An unexpected wave of violent incidents has shaken the country 25 hours before the elections, but military forces have repeated that the elections will be carried out in complete peace with the people's cooperation. Terrorist and guerrilla attacks were staged in Bogota, Cali, Popayan and Mompos, which is in the province of Bolivar in northern Colombia.

In Cali (Valle Department), a group of the clandestine M-19 movement broke into a meeting of banking employees. In Bogota, a subversive group of the Popular Liberation Army (EPL) tried to seize an institute of the National Telecommunications Enterprise. They were able to throw a bomb at the building in northern Bogota but watchmen prevented them from taking it. Near Mompos a police patrol was ambushed by an ELN guerrilla group and three guerrillas were captured.

The dynamite attack against the Conservative Party office in Popayan--reportedly staged by an EPL group--caused material damage estimated at about \$18,000 but no casualties. The explosion destroyed the building, furniture and office equipment and caused great alarm in the neighborhood. The M-19 commando which harangued banking employees in Cali asked unionized workers to support the working classes of the country.

Army Commanding Gen Jaime Sarmiento minimized the incidents and said that they are isolated and do not endanger the elections. He confirmed that dozens of persons have been arrested in the country as part of the activities of the democracy plan [plan democracia]. Police and military vigilance has been intensified in the past few hours when the dry law went into effect and the possession of weapons was banned.

Guerrillas Force Electoral Suspension

PA262015Y Paris AFP in Spanish 1958 GMT 26 Feb 78 PA

[Text] Bogota, 26 Feb (AFP)--The legislative elections were suspended today in Canas Gordas, a town in Antioquia Department, after a group of guerrillas attacked a Colombian army post, it was learned here. One soldier was wounded in the attack, which was attributed to the pro-Soviet Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). The guerrillas escaped to the mountains with several weapons belonging to the military. The post was then reinforced by members of the Fourth Brigade, which has its headquarters in Medellin, the capital of Antioquia Department.

Valencia Tovar on Elections

PA241347Y Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish 18 Feb 78 p 10-A PA

[Article by Edgard Caldas Vera]

[Text] Retired Gen Alvaro Valencia Tovar, the presidential candidate of the National Renewal Movement, said yesterday that it is not true that he is a fascist, as many have said.

He said yesterday during a news conference that his movement is republican and has been created as "a supraparty group inspired by the need to unite the Colombian nation around a great objective capable of generating the necessary forces to overcome the most serious crisis in the history of our country and to carry out a profound transformation that in time will be equivalent to the construction of a new society."

He added: "In the political field, the struggle is for an authentic democracy that will put into effect the philosophy of a consensus of wills, which will allow us to live in an environment of order, rights and liberty. In order to achieve this, the government must be conceived as firm within the limitations of the law and respectable as a result of its characteristics as well as its ethical conduct. It must also be an executor of the will of the people and dynamic in serving the citizens."

The candidate said that the remaining days before the 26 February elections are a period of observation. He noted: "Of course, we will carry out some political activities in order to reaffirm the philosophy of the movement for the presidential elections in June."

Valencia Tovar said that he does not expect to be elected president in the mid-year elections because of the recent creation of his movement. However, he noted that "the important thing is the qualitative aspect of the ideological principles of national renewal in the social, political and economic fields."

The former general said that he has never thought that the traditional parties are finished but believes that their leaders should be removed. He criticized the present congress and said that if he were elected president of Colombia he would reform it. However, if there were any opposition to this action he would then call for a referendum, he said. "The congress I am thinking about is one with a single chamber with 100 members who could not be consecutively reelected. The candidate also said that if he becomes president he would change whatever is useless in the judicial system, especially the penal sector. He said he did not agree with the death penalty in Colombia. "I think that an effective law is better," he said.

DEFENSE MINISTER DEFENDS LAW BARRING EUCARAM AS CANDIDATE

PA250349Y Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 0035 GMT 25 Feb 78 PA

[Excerpts] Quito, 24 Feb (LATIN)--The candidate with the best chance of winning the presidential elections in July, Sixto Duran, today resigned as mayor of this capital to open his preelection campaign.

Meanwhile, Defense Minister Gen Andres Arrata has assumed the defense of the recently promulgated elections law, which has been strongly criticized by all the political sectors in the country for barring two candidates. From Guayaquil, 450 km southwest of here, it was reported today that a planned rally in support of political leader Asaad Bucaram, one of the presidential nominees who have been barred from running, has been banned.

Referring to the Bucaram case, the defense minister said yesterday evening that the change made to the elections law "is a decision of the armed forces which have done nothing but to confirm their loyalty to their principles. It is for this reason that they want their president to be an Ecuadorean, without having the slightest doubt about his nationality." He added: "These principles are included as doctrines in our military laws, which establish that officers and soldiers must be Ecuadorean by birth and that their fathers or mothers must be Ecuadorean also. The president of the nation, who is by law the nation's commander in chief, cannot under any argument bypass, without scrutiny, this principle which will always be maintained by the armed forces." The minister said that the government will continue carrying out the legal restructuring plan promoted by the governing military triumvirate.

CHILEAN JUNTA MEMBER ARRIVES FOR OFFICIAL VISIT

PA260339Y Paris AFP in Spanish 0018 GMT 26 Feb 78 PA

[Text] Quito, 25 Feb (AFP)--Gen Cesar Mendoza, director of the carabineros and member of the Chilean military junta, arrived in Quito today for a 1-week official visit. Cesar Mendoza was greeted at 2340 GMT at Mariscal Sucre Airport by Brig Gen Luis Leoro Franco, member of the Supreme Council of Government, other government officials and members of the Chilean Embassy. Police units rendered official honors to the visitor during a brief ceremony at the airport.

The director of the Chilean carabineros (uniformed police) was specially invited to visit Ecuador by the commanding general of the police, who also invited other high-ranking police officers from Panama, Venezuela and Colombia, who are expected to arrive in Quito soon to attend the celebrations of Ecuadorean Police Day.

BRIEFS

NEW LIBERAL PARTY DIRECTOR--Quito, 18 Feb (AFP)--Liberal leader Daniel Alvarez Tenorio has been appointed national director of Ecuador's Liberal Party. Alvarez Tenorio will replace Dr Francisco Huerta Montalvo, who has left the party's leadership to become a presidential candidate. [Paris AFP in Spanish 1722 GMT 18 Feb 78 PA]

ABC COLOR PRAISES TODMAN'S SPEECH

FY222028Y Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish 22 Feb 78 p 12 FY

[Editorial: "More Sensible Standards on Human Rights"]

[Text] Showing a wisdom so far unsurpassed, Mr Terence Todman, assistant secretary for Latin American affairs of the U.S. Government, has clearly laid down the standards which should be followed in the future by the U.S. Government in its relations with the countries south of the Rio Grande. In his speech he has given a sort of "decalog" in which are gathered all the criticisms made against Mr Carter's government by those nations which have been offended and humiliated, mostly for no or little reason.

None of the nations involved has made such a clear proposal of the policy to be followed by a nation respecting the rights of others, because those nations have merely been answering the attacks at the time they were made. Mr Todman, from whom not too much was expected, to tell the truth, has made a perfect summary and thrown it into the face of the U.S. people who can now view both sides of the coin, as revealed by two of their men. On the one hand Mr Carter, with an uncompromising appearance, and on the other Mr Todman who, after having personally verified the situation in many of the countries involved, categorically states that Mr Carter's policy has been counterproductive, at best.

It is true that the Latin American past has seen violations of the rights of human beings; it is also true that the present is not ideal for fervent and sincere champions of freedom; but it is no less true that a progressive road has been followed and that there are certain circumstances which make it necessary, for the good of all free men, to defend a way of life which is very dear to us and which is being exposed to a cunning, increasingly strong and constant attack.

The only thing which Mr Carter's policy, so full of inconsistencies, apparently unyielding toward some and so flexible toward others, has achieved is the estrangement of the Latin American governments from the United States. Despite earlier mistakes, the United States had some friends, but those have become fewer since Mr Carter became president and the United States is now only left with the self-seeking approval from those who are its most tenacious and bitter enemies.

Mr Todman's position would appear to be a move forward which would overcome, by its very conviction, a long series of mistakes and exaggerations, without abandoning the goal of any truly free and democratic government--that is, to proselytize. In this context human rights will not only not lose their importance, but will be far better served, because there will be a clear way of confronting situations and circumstances and of differentiating between the governments of Cuba or the Soviet Union, for example, and those of Argentina and Uruguay.

Mr Todman has shown that he is the wisest among the officials of Mr Carter's government. Let us hope that he does not fall under a cloud.

MAJOR UNIONS DECIDE TO HOLD NATIONWIDE STRIKE

PA232359Y Paris AFP in Spanish 0241 GMT 23 Feb 78 PA

[Excerpt] Lima, 22 Feb (AFP)--The major Peruvian unions today agreed to hold a nationwide general strike on 27 and 28 February. The main objectives of the strike are the reinstatement of "all the workers dismissed as a result of the 19 July strike against the government's economic policy, the release of imprisoned union members, and an end to the trials of other workers and the repatriation of those who have been deported. The unions are also demanding measures to prevent the increase in prices and to lift the prohibition on strikes in the mining and fishing industries and some agrarian cooperatives.

A disagreement between the orthodox communist General Confederation of Workers of Peru [CGTP] and the leftist Unitary Struggle Command [Comando Unitario de Lucha--CUL] was settled today when the CUL decided to go along with the strike on 27 and 28 February.

Cisneros Opposes Strike Call

PA222353Y Paris AFP in Spanish 1602 GMT 22 Feb 78 PA

[Text] Lima, 22 Feb (AFP)--Peruvian Interior Minister Gen Luis Cisneros today appealed to the working class not to support the 4-day general strike that has been decreed by leftist trade unions. The communist General Confederation of Workers of Peru has scheduled a strike for 27 and 28 February, whereas another group of federations comprising the united struggle command has scheduled one for 1 and 2 March. The strike goals are to obtain the reinstatement of several thousands of workers who were dismissed for participating in a general strike in July, to gain salary increases, to bring about the repatriation of deportees and to gain other labor benefits.

Cisneros said that the movement is part of the communist struggle to replace the current leaders, who have been accused of being revisionists, with more radical ones. He said that what is required at this time of economic crisis is harder work and more production. But if this is not achieved, then the time will have come to build a great national front with those wishing to reactivate the country as opposed to those who seek to destroy the country's economy. [sentence as received] Saying that it is not possible to rehire the dismissed workers because their positions have been filled by other, Cisneros ended by saying that the government will give all necessary guarantees to the workers and businessmen who work on the days set for the strike.

CGTP Strike Notice Rejected

PA241609Y Paris AFP in Spanish 0416 GMT 24 Feb 78 PA

[Text] Lima, 23 Feb (AFP)--It was announced here today that the Labor Ministry has declared unacceptable the notice given by the CGTP before staging a nationwide strike on Monday and Tuesday of next week. At the same time the Labor Ministry informed the communist-oriented labor union that it should refrain from staging the planned strike which, if carried out, would be declared illegal.

The CGTP informed the Labor Ministry of its intention to stage a strike in compliance with a legal requirement that all strikes be announced 72 hours ahead of time. Other labor organizations are supporting the strike, but have not yet given the legal notice.

The ministry said that the strike is designed to achieve revocation of a legal provision which authorized the dismissal of labor activists who promoted a 24-hour national strike last July. It added that the strike would cause serious damage to the country's economy. On the other hand, the Labor Ministry ordered accelerated processing of the cases of many workers who are seeking reinstatement in their jobs.

Some 5,000 workers were dismissed as a result of the strike in July, but almost one-half of them recovered their jobs afterward. Some 100 dismissed workers are presently staging a hunger strike in demand of reinstatement.

Cisneros: No Strike

PA250519Y Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 0507 GMT 25 Feb 78 PA

[By Miguel Paredes]

[Text] Lima, 24 Feb (LATIN)--The Peruvian Federation of Drivers (FOHP) announced here this afternoon that it will support the national strike called by a communist organization for Monday and Tuesday, and has ordered its members to abstain from rendering any service. The FOHP decision will paralyze a large part of mass transportation, thus affecting workers in general. Meanwhile, Interior Minister Gen Luis Cisneros has categorically affirmed that "there will not be any strike," but declined to tell the newsmen what measures the government will adopt to prevent the paralyzation of activities. Answering newsmen at the Jorge Chavez International Airport, Cisneros said: "I am not saying that the strike will be a failure. I am saying that there will not be a strike." He said that the government's first step has been to declare improper [improcedente] the strike called by the General Confederation of Workers of Peru.

Cisneros: Dialog Is Continuing

PY251616Y Lima Domestic Service in Spanish 1200 GMT 25 Feb 78 PY

[Text] The interior minister has asserted: there will be no strike. In a statement made yesterday, Minister Luis Cisneros Vizquerra said that the strike will not take place because of the good sense of the workers. Answering questions by newsmen, Cisneros Vizquerra said that the government has not broken off the dialog with any of the labor leaders. He also said that the government has made no direct commitment to the labor leadership, but that there has been good will on the part of the government, a feeling which will continue to prevail.

The Central Organization of the Peruvian Revolution [CTRP], the National Confederation of Workers [CNT] and the Confederation of Workers of Peru [CTP] will not join the strike announced for 27 and 28 February. The former two labor centrals had already stated their rejection of the strike in communiques issued the day before yesterday, and they have now been joined by the CTP through a communique alerting its members, signed by Secretary General Julio Cruzado Zavala.

The CTP tells its members that it has not decreed any work stoppage, although it does not renounce the rights to which it is entitled as an organization defending the workers. The workers should therefore report to work normally. It also appeals to all workers to remain united and on the alert and to reject any situation which may endanger the sacred interests of the Peruvian people and their institutions.

CGTP Declares General Strike

PA270008Y Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 1914 GMT 26 Feb 78 PA

[By Miguel Paredes]

[Excerpts] Lima, 26 Feb (LATIN)--The CGTP today confirmed that its 700,000 members will hold a general strike tomorrow and Tuesday to demand political and labor amnesty, wage increases and a price freeze on staples. A union spokesman with communist leanings told LATIN that "the strike will go on no matter what."

Three other labor centrals have rejected the strike, and the public transportation workers union agreed to work normally during the days of the strike under police protection offered by the government. The government advised the people that in addition to the police, army, navy and air force members will guarantee the peaceful conduct of daily activities.

The semiofficial Central Organisation of the Peruvian Revolution [OTRP], the Confederation of Workers of Peru [CTP]--controlled by the "APRA" Party--and the National Confederation of Workers [CNT]--an appendage of the Christian Democratic Party [PDC] have issued separate communiques stating that they will not go along with the strike and that the CGTP measure is of a "political nature" to "undermine the stability of the regime."

For its part, the Peruvian Federation of Drivers [FOHP] has reconsidered its initial decision and has decided not to join the strike after meeting with Interior Minister Gen Luis Cisneros, who offered "substantial guarantees" to the union. FOHP Secretary General Juan P. Luna stated that his group supports labor amnesty, "but without participating in political matters."

According to newspaper accounts published today, the National Miners and Metallurgical Workers Federation [FNDM] urged its 40,000 members not to join the strike. Others that will not join the strike are the 15,000 Central Peruvian Mining Enterprise [CENTROMINPERU] workers who work in the main Andean copper deposits in central and south Peru.

Moreover, it was confirmed that 13 workers of the Chimbote steel mill started a hunger strike today to demand their reinstatement. The group was fired for participating in the 19 July strike. It is still unknown if the 100 workers who started a voluntary hunger strike 3 weeks ago demanding their reinstatement are continuing to strike. They remain in hospitals and police stations. Judge Wills Gonzales has started criminal proceedings against the workers for "crimes against health."

On Friday the Labor Ministry termed the CGTP strike illegal because the union's arguments are not just on labor matters but are of a political nature. The morning papers concurred in condemning the measure and harshly criticized the strike organizers. The editorials concur in stating that the strike will aggravate the serious economic crisis in Peru.

Arrests Announced

PA260007Y Paris AFP in Spanish 2311 GMT 25 Feb 78 PA

[Excerpt] Lima, 25 Feb (AFP)--Interior Minister Gen Luis Cisneros announced here today that "several arrests" have been made in connection with the strike announced for Monday and Tuesday. According to General Cisneros, those arrests were made in Lima, in the northern port of Chimbote and in the southeastern city of Cuzco, where "certain elements have been trying to create disturbances." He added that most of those arrested are connected with "the ultraleftwing guerrillas" and that several Molotov cocktails and dynamite sticks were found in the offices of the Cuzco Students Federation.

Sources close to the leftwing sector claim that lawyer Laura Caller, representative of Amnesty International in Peru, has been arrested in Lima. They have voiced concern for her health because she is reportedly a diabetic. The Interior Ministry denied that National Agrarian Confederation (CNA) leader Jose Luis Alvarado has been deported. After repudiating "the tendentious and insolent terms" in which the CNA denounced his alleged deportation, the ministry explained that the airport police had detained Alvarado for only 2 hours while checking to see if an order preventing his return to the country was still in effect.

For its part, the Labor Ministry today disregarded an appeal by the General Confederation of Workers of Peru concerning a decision declaring the strike improper [improcedente], and reaffirmed its warning that if held, the strike will be declared illegal. The ministry reiterated that the restrictive measures taken thus far "do not fall within the purview" of the labor authorities, except for those dealing with certain claims for reinstatement that are already being reviewed.

Amnesty International Figure Released

PA260434Y Paris AFP in Spanish 0413 GMT 26 Feb 78 PA

[Text] Lima, 25 Feb (AFP)--Laura Caller, the Amnesty International representative in Peru, was released tonight, according to sources close to her lawyer. Laura Caller had been arrested 12 hours earlier when some members of COCEP (Worker-Peasant Student Front) were obtaining signatures for the electoral registration of that organization. Caller was released after having been questioned by the police. There were no reasons given for her arrest, which apparently had no relation with the labor strike announced for Monday and Tuesday.

TEXTILE WORKERS DECLARE INDEFINITE STRIKE

PA232212Y Paris AFP in Spanish 1610 GMT 23 Feb 78 PA

[Text] Lima, 23 Feb (AFP)--Peru's 30,000 textile workers today declared a general indefinite strike in support of cost-of-living adjustments.

The Federation of Textile Workers of Peru, which had set a strike deadline for Monday, said that negotiations for the application of the 1945 collective agreement on wage adjustments had failed. After noting that the workers are also demanding the reinstatement of textile workers who have been dismissed, the federation warned that it will remain steadfast until the 1945 agreement is fully implemented.

The federation's struggle committee reported, for its part, that because the terms of the agreement have not been fully complied with since May, 1976, each worker is owed the sum of 45,273 soles (\$347). The committee said finally that the total sum owed to the 30,000 textiles workers is 1.358 billion soles (\$10.4 million), which the federation hopes to recover by means of the strike.

HAYA DE LA TORRE DENOUNCES ELECTION LAW MOTIVES

PA232304Y Paris AFP in Spanish 1611 GMT 22 Feb 78 PA

[Text] Lima, 22 Feb (AFP)--Victor Haya de la Torre, head of the Peruvian American Revolutionary Popular Alliance [APRA], last night denounced the "fraudulent purpose" of the forthcoming constituent elections in June, adding that he will work to attain a social leftist democratic republic. This politician, who is 83 today, spoke at a meeting in Arequipa, the country's second most important city, where he expressed his concern over what he called "obstacles" to holding genuine elections.

Cheered by thousands of his party members, Haya de la Torre said that "the preferential vote is evidence that there is a fraudulent purpose behind the forthcoming constituent assembly elections." The parties were not consulted about the preferential vote, that is, the selection of only one candidate from among the 100 run by each party. The system was borrowed from Belgium, where the circumstances are different, the speaker said.

In view of a possible fraudulent election, Haya de la Torre asked all Peruvians to "maintain an alert and vigilant attitude toward restoring democracy in Peru," so as to insure that "the votes express the people's true will." He added that the constituent elections are one of his party's objectives because they represent the country's juridical and political recovery. But he warned that there have appeared "methods and obstacles which seem to be suspicious pretexts to prevent the holding of free elections." One of these obstacles, he added, is the refusal to permit Peruvians living abroad to vote; another is the "government's zeal" to profit from the elections by charging each party representative 8 soles.

After mentioning "the danger that the constituent assembly will not really represent the people's will," he said that the new political charter "must establish the basis for a social leftist democratic republic, oriented in such a manner that it will fulfill the people's vital needs." Further on he said that the APRA does not imitate any foreign party and that it did not have the opportunity to create a new Peruvian state because of tyranny and totalitarianism. Haya de la Torre, who took advantage of the occasion to send a birthday greeting to Venezuelan leader Romulo Betancourt, said that his party proposes a true decentralization, for which Arequipa has always struggled. "During the rest of my life," which will not be long, "I shall be at the service of the people's rights, regardless of the circumstances, because I am not afraid to face a firing squad," the APRA leader concluded.

PEREZ PERSONALLY INVOLVED IN RESTORING OIL SALES

PA241618Y Paris AFP in Spanish 2046 GMT 23 Feb 78 PA

[By Jose Puertas]

[Excerpt] Caracas, 23 Feb (AFP)--President Carlos Andres Perez has personally undertaken the task of reactivating oil sales in an effort to prevent a deficit in revenues during an electoral year, it was learned here today. Crude exports this year dropped 10 percent below budget estimates, thus forcing the government to reduce expenditures and delay the completion of projects. According to observers, this situation could put Democratic Action [AD], the official party, in a tight spot in December's general elections.

Finance Minister Luis Silva Luongo reported today that President Perez is making "personal efforts from which we can expect a favorable international reaction in demand of our oil." However, he added that the government "is prepared for a possible reduction in the state's oil revenues to the amount of some 3.5 billion bolivares" (more than \$800 million). He added that heroic measures, which he considered unjustified, have been discarded but that measures will be implemented to diminish current expenditures by about \$465 million.

Further on, he said that the collection of overdue taxes, not oil taxes, amounting to \$400 million are being brought up to date in order to balance the budget.

Some of the savings measures are the freezing of wages, a prohibition on hiring new personnel and filling vacancies, a prohibition on buying office equipment and material and the elimination of any public relations or travel expenditure which is not indispensable. Minister Silva Luongo also disclosed that public works which are not priority will be slowed down. He mentioned some of the works which are not going to be finished this year.

Perez News Conference

PA251926Y Caracas EL UNIVERSAL in Spanish 20 Feb 78 pp 2-1, 2-23, 2-24 PA

["Text" of news conference by Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez in Puerto La Cruz during his tour of Anzoategui State--date not given]

[Excerpts] Question: Some opposition sectors have expressed the opinion that the national government should adjust the budget rather than increase the country's debt by asking for new loans as a result of the present drop in oil production and the eventual limitation of national budget resources. What is your opinion?

Answer: I have answered similar questions from other newspapers. My first thought is that there is no reason to fear a sudden decrease in Venezuelan oil exports. I have said that the low production is due in part to the fact that we are exporting surplus stocks, that is, oil which had been taken from the wells and stored in tanks by the operating companies. This has made readjustment necessary. In the second place it is true that the world oil market has slackened. This is so first because the industrialized countries have made great efforts to lower the rate of their consumption increase, and, second, because other oil sources have materialized, such as Alaska and the North Sea along with Mexican oil exports. This could eventually cause a reduction of Venezuelan oil exports during 1978. In the third place, oil experts of Venezuela and its Energy and Mines Ministry believe that at the most the decrease will not exceed 50,000 barrels a day.

In other words, our exports will average 1.15 million barrels a day during 1978. This could eventually cause a budget deficit for 1978, but would not be a serious problem for the Venezuelan economy.

Another aspect which we should consider is that the oil which we do not sell today will be sold tomorrow at a much higher price, since we are continuing to experience a world-wide energy shortage. We know that specialists maintain that oil will continue in short supply in the world. The concern is not over oil which might remain in the deposits of some country because a substitute has been found, but over oil that will be depleted before a substitute is found. This answers the first part of the question. Now the part about indebtedness.

During my administration Venezuela has undertaken vigorous developmental activity which has enabled us to utilize funds provided not only by our oil, but also by international public credit as well. We have obtained loans under the best conditions any country in the world could wish for because the terms and interest rates are truly satisfactory for Venezuela. This indebtedness is also connected with another circumstance: Why does Venezuela make loans and then ask for other loans in turn? In the first place, because the economic cooperation plans which Venezuela has developed entail obligations based on political, social and humanitarian considerations. It is political obligation because the OPEC could not exist if it acted like a vulgar monopoly that wishes to exploit other developing countries. All OPEC member countries cooperate in this manner.

In the second place, since we are not a developed country, since we are a poor country in spite of our oil wealth, we do not give money away. Our cooperation is not based on concession credits. We charge suitable interest rates for the funds we send abroad. May I add that the money we lend is generating more interest than what we pay on the loans we request. This is very important.

Now then, is this indebtedness just and appropriate or should Venezuela restrict itself to its own resources generated by its oil? My government believes that this indebtedness is just and necessary. We have a historical situation which may never occur again in Venezuela: the opportunity to speed up and accelerate our development. When a country undertakes this kind of development it encounters tremendous obstacles. The most serious is human resources. Human resources cannot be prepared beforehand to undertake development later because this would create an untenable imbalance for any country. Every country in the world which has attained development has had serious difficulties in training its labor force and developing necessary infrastructure for this purpose.

What kind of historic situation are we faced with? The fact that the world is experiencing both inflation and recession. This has caused unemployment in the major countries of the world. Venezuela can therefore obtain the personnel it needs for accelerated development through selective immigration. This circumstance would not occur at any other time, and who knows whether it will again present itself to our country. We are taking advantage of this situation with boldness, but with carefully prepared plans such as the 5th National Plan, which requires that we ask for extraordinary credits by turning to international government-to-government credit.

But everything depends on what it is used for. If you ask any businessman whether he works only with his own resources, every one of them in Venezuela and throughout the world would tell you that this is not so. They use the national or international credit system to carry out their major projects. Venezuela is doing exactly the same. The important fact is: What is the money being invested in? It is being invested in productive projects which will make it possible to repay the loan.

There is more. When I came into office petroleum production was 3.4 million barrels per day. I have reduced it to the 1956 level or 2.2 million barrels per day. In 1974, 1975, 1976 and 1977, we could have sold 3.4 million barrels per day because our wells have that capacity. We could have obtained fabulous sums, which, if deposited in international banks, could have financed our development plans without the need for international loans. But is it just and responsible to squander our petroleum, and to sell it at today's prices when we know that the petroleum stored in our soil will be worth much more than what we could have obtained in 1974, 1975, 1976 and 1977? There is another explanation about our debts. We have the resources to repay and the interest we pay on our debts today is much less than the prices we will obtain for the petroleum stored in our soil. These are specific explanations.

Now, what is happening in our country? Here we are in Anzoategui State. During the previous administration 660 million bolivares were invested in this state. During the 4 years of my administration we have invested 2.44 billion bolivares. This is really a fabulous sum. Its results can be seen in the boom and progress in Anzoategui State. Yesterday, in this very chamber, we received representatives of all sectors of Anzoategui State. There were industrialists, businessmen, farmers, cattlemen, peasants and workers as well as representatives of research and higher education institutes.

[Question] Yesterday the possibility was mentioned that the sale of petroleum to the United States could be negotiated on a government-to-government basis. President Carter also announced that the United States is ready to take reprisals against any country that may at any time embargo petroleum sales to his country. I would like to know if there really are government-to-government talks, and what is your opinion on Mr Carter's statements.

[Answer] In the first place, Venezuela is interested in government-to-government talks on the sale of petroleum. This is true not only with the United States, but also with other governments in America, Europe and Africa. The mines and energy minister will fly to Washington soon to fulfill a commitment between President Carter and myself, made during my visit to that country to study the possibilities of government-to-government negotiations. This naturally does not mean a substantial change in Venezuelan petroleum policy, because we shall continue to act within the OPEC, maintaining a world-wide policy of agreement. We are also holding talks with governments in other parts of the world for the purpose of technological exchange, because Venezuela does not want to become committed to any one kind of technology.

Regarding the second matter, our country, in spite of its small size and military weakness, will never accept threats of any kind from any country in the world irrespective of how powerful it may be. We trust President Carter's democratic sincerity, which he has expressed definitely and consistently.

In the second place, we cannot believe that the United States under current world conditions will take any action to violate any country's rights or sovereignty. We are not worried and shall not accept threats of any kind. By the same token Venezuela is also in no condition to attack any other country, because in case of an alleged Venezuelan aggression against any other nation or nations we would undoubtedly have to expect retaliation.

I think that the situation in the world of some years ago, when some OPEC countries placed an embargo against the United States and Europe, will not repeat itself. If it did, Venezuela would not participate in it.

TORRIJOS SAYS CANAL ACCORDS 'NOT BEST POSSIBLE'

LD261830Y Belgrade TANJUG in English 1621 GMT 26 Feb 78 LD

[Text] Panama City, February 26 (TANJUG)--Marshal Tito is one of the great leaders who deserves the most respect. This was said by the head of the Panamanian revolutionary government General Omar Torrijos in an interview to Yugoslav television in which he stressed the tremendous contribution of the Yugoslav president to the development of the non-aligned movement. In this interview, General Torrijos also expressed the hope that the U.S. Senate will ratify new U.S.-Panamanian agreements, signed last year, on the future of the Panama Canal. He said that these agreements are "not the best possible for Panama, but stressed, nevertheless, that they are important because the situation has started changing at last.

PRESS REACTION TO ANTITREATY SENATORS

LA ESTRELLA Scores Senators

PA241425Y Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 22 Feb 78 p 4 PA

[Editorial: "The Revenues and U.S. Taxpayers"]

[Text] Some U.S. senators opposed to the ratification of the Torrijos-Carter treaties, as well as other sectors sharing the same position, have taken upon themselves the task of presenting reasons and arguments of the most varied nature to support their cause.

After resorting to the most diverse means without results and saying a lot of nonsense--such as the imaginary monuments erected in Panama to honor the memory of Buneau-Verilla--they now believe they have the means of strengthening their position by alleging that ratification of the treaties will be a burden on U.S. taxpayers.

Since we have no idea of the canal's revenues, its expenses for operation, maintenance and defense, or the round figures Panama will be receiving when the new agreement goes into effect, we cannot give figures or reach conclusions. However, knowing that U.S. budgets in the revenues and expenses columns carry astronomical figures expressed in billions of dollars--figures that have been released to the public--the idea that U.S. taxpayers would resent having Panama receive each year a few more dollars than the meager amount it has received so far is so ridiculous that it is not even funny.

If the canal operations should run a deficit and it became necessary for the United States to use federal funds to meet its obligation to Panama when the new treaties go into effect, what this would represent to U.S. taxpayers is so insignificant and minimal that it is almost impossible to determine.

The adversaries of the treaties who have run out of valid arguments to support their position are nevertheless making up new ones, no matter how absurd and ridiculous. Proof of this is that their allegations, which lack consistency, have not prospered in the U.S. Senate where, luckily, good sense, judgement and a perfect knowledge of facts prevail.

CRITICA Raps Amendments

PA261945Y Panama City CRITICA in Spanish 25 Feb 78 p 4 PA

[Editorial: "Unacceptable Amendments to the New Canal Treaties"]

[Text] Following the defeat by a conscientious majority vote in the Senate of the grotesque maneuver of holding a secret session so that the ultraconservative senators could enjoy themselves by presenting drug trafficking charges against General Torrijos and some of his relatives, the decent (if the term exists in their lexicon) thing to do for the senators who were left standing as vulgar, two-bit plotters, would have been to assume a moderate attitude. However, this is not possible when hatred goads the mediocre, who are incapable of controlling their primitive passions. For this reason, they have now resorted to a new trick in the bid to thwart a new, harmonious relationship between the United States and Panama.

It has been amply shown that when international treaties which are subject to ratification by the U.S. Senate undergo changes or amendments, they must return to the other party for acceptance or rejection. In the case of the Torrijos-Carter treaties, which Panama ratified through a national plebiscite according to Article 274 of its political constitution, this sovereign act solely and exclusively covers the treaties that were signed on 7 September 1977 by Panamanian Chief of Government General Torrijos and U.S. President James Carter. These treaties cannot be replaced by others insofar as their Spanish and English texts are concerned, because both originals were officially compared in an exhaustive manner before the signing.

What would be the immediate effect of any change or amendment introduced the the U.S. Senate into the treaties or their supplementary agreements, which were also signed on that date with equal solemnity? Of course, it would mean having to call a new plebiscite to approve the amendment or amendments. And if they are rejected, we would have to undergo again the painful experience of engaging in a renegotiation which no Panamanian would accept out of an elementary sense of dignity and civic spirit.

Nevertheless, Senator James Allen, Democrat from Alabama and an arch-enemy of the treaties, yesterday proposed an amendment calling for the presence of U.S. military bases after the year 2000, when the treaties will expire. Senators Robert Dole and Jesse Helms are also drafting amendments on the economic aspects of the agreement.

These gross distortions should not come as a surprise because these senators have never disguised their opposition to the treaties. They are living in the past and cannot understand that in this fast changing world where submissiveness and conformity are on the way out it is best to assume a compromising attitude because it has been proven that any attempt at domination is inevitably followed by outbreaks of rebellion.

It does not matter if the hot-headed senators continue their efforts to destroy the work of well-intentioned persons who met to find the best possible solution to a dramatic reality which some senators are artificially trying to maintain. Every trick in this direction would be ludicrous were it not for the fact that it contributes to arousing emotions like those which are being fueled in the Canal Zone by the character known as "Bulldog Drummond."

COSTA RICA

CARAZO URGES OPPOSITION TO VESCO CITIZENSHIP

PA242238Y San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 2201 GMT 24 Feb 78 PA

[Text] Rodrigo Carazo a few minutes ago issued the following statement to the Costa Rican people during a news conference:

Vesco requested Costa Rican citizenship on Thursday. This is not only an affront to the Costa Rican people but also a challenge that we must immediately answer not with violence but with words and dignified conduct. I hereby respectfully call on all Costa Ricans, particularly all those who participated in the December 1975 civic movement that asked President Oduber to expel Vesco, to participate with me in a meeting to be held at the [word indistinct] on Monday night at 1900 to oppose Mr Vesco's plan.

All Costa Ricans of good will should join this struggle so that, with a sense of national honor and a peaceful spirit, we shall make our national dignity shine.

Costa Rican citizenship is the greatest honor that our fatherland can grant to a foreigner. It is the act by which a person born outside our borders becomes part of our family. We Costa Ricans do not want Robert Vesco to become part of the Costa Rican family for any reason. It is a matter of honor and dignity.

Opposition Leaders' Warning

PA260017Y Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2145 GMT 25 Feb 78 PA

[Text] San Jose, 25 Feb (ACAN-EFE)--President-elect Rodrigo Carazo has been severely warned against trying to resolve Costa Rica's problems in the streets or by himself before he takes office. The warnings were made by high-ranking leaders of the defeated National Liberation Party after the newly elected president announced that he is inviting Costa Ricans to a popular meeting on Monday to repudiate the presence of U.S. fugitive millionaire Robert L. Vesco and his attempt to obtain Costa Rican nationality.

According to Jorge Luis Villanueva and Danilo Jimenez, two top members of the party still in power, the problem posed by Vesco's presence in Costa Rica should be approached without pressure from the masses or demagogic stances.

In their statements to Noticias Monumental, both leaders stressed that until 8 May the president of Costa Rica is Daniel Oduber and that until then only he, and nobody else, is invested with the power of the presidency.

This direct allusion to Carazo's decisions is related to the agitation caused by Vesco's request on Thursday for Costa Rican citizenship.

SECURITY MINISTER DENIES CARLOS IN COUNTRY

PA242113Y Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2042 GMT 24 Feb 78 PA

[Text] San Jose, 24 Feb (ACAN-EFE)--Public Security Minister Col Mario Charpentier has denied Venezuelan newspaper reports claiming that the notorious terrorist Carlos Illich Ramirez, better known as "the Jackal," was in Costa Rica preparing to kill Nicaraguan President Anastasio Somoza. Charpentier termed the reports speculation in view of the information available at his office from local and foreign sources.

According to a Venezuelan paper, "The Jackal" is reportedly at a farm in Guanacaste Province, bordering Nicaragua, preparing to kill Somoza. The report added that in order to carry out his mission the terrorist has the assistance of the Soviet "KGB" as part of an alleged mutual assistance pact between the Sandinist National Liberation Front and the PLO.

POLITICAL ASYLUM GRANTED TO TWO SANDINISTS

PA241919Y San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1730 GMT 24 Feb 78 PA

[Text] Foreign Minister Gonzalo J. Facio has announced that political asylum will be granted to the two Sandinists who are presently in the Costa Rican Embassy in Managua. After due study, it was confirmed that the Sandinists are political refugees. Therefore, two more Sandinists have been granted political asylum in Costa Rica.

EL SALVADOR

FPL CLAIMS ATTACK ON POLICE, CRITICIZES U.S.

PA270208Y Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1616 GMT 26 Feb 78 PA

[Text] San Salvador, 26 Feb (ACAN-EFE)--The clandestine "Farabundo Marti" Popular Liberation Forces [FPL] today took credit for the attack on two policemen yesterday in San Miguel, 138 km east of San Salvador. Jose Saul Lopez Viera was killed and his companion, Mario Hernan Quintanilla, was seriously wounded in this attack. In a communique released this morning the leftist group called the operation "Comrade John" in homage to Professor Alfredo Aguilar Flor (John), who died in a clash with security forces at the end of 1977 on a highway in western Salvador.

After their usual criticism of the government, the leftists strongly attacked the human rights policy promoted worldwide by U.S. President Jimmy Carter, stating that now the United States "is trying to hide behind that front and wipe away all previous crimes, pretending to be 'clean' but continuing to commit even more horrendous crimes against all peoples." Then they ask: Who murdered millions of adults, old people, women and children at Hiroshima and Nagasaki? Who rained chemical bombs and massacred the Vietnamese people for many years? Who has perpetrated the most criminal torture and murder of the Chilean, Argentine, Uruguayan, Nicaraguan and Guatemalan people? They also held the United States responsible for similar intervention in El Salvador.

The FPL said that it took the regulation weapons from the policemen attacked yesterday and reaffirmed that it will continue its "prolonged" struggle until a new system of life is established in this country.

GUATEMALA

ELECTIONS ENDANGERED BY GOVERNMENT WORKERS' STRIKE

PA251510Y Guatemala City Radio Fabulosa Network in Spanish 1220 GMT 25 Feb 78 PA

[SERCANO Network]

[Text] The culmination of the electoral process which is scheduled for 5 March has been endangered by the strike begun on Thursday by government workers. The paralyzation of the postal and telecommunications services jeopardizes the electoral process because employees of these services are on strike throughout the republic.

The government has begun all kinds of initiatives, particularly a study by the Finance Ministry of the possibility of acceding to the 50-percent wage increase demanded by the workers.

The presidential candidates have expressed solidarity with the workers and have said that their demands are just. Gen Romeo Lucas and Dr Francisco Villagran have offered to mediate the conflict, but their offer has not yet been accepted.

Meanwhile, Nicolas Reyes, director of the national printing office, where all papers to be used for the electoral process are printed, has informed SERCANO that the ballots for president and for deputies are ready. He added that the printing office has not been affected by the government workers' strike.

Postponement Considered Likely

PA251648Y Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 1504 GMT 25 Feb 78 PA

[Excerpts] Guatemala City, 25 Feb (LATIN)--The government workers' strike may cause the suspension of the 5 March elections, in which almost 2 million Guatemalans are to elect a replacement for President Kjell Eugenio Laugerud Garcia.

An announcement to this effect was made by Arturo Maldonado de la Cerda, president of the Electoral Council, who explained that since the postal and telegram workers were on strike it is practically impossible to communicate with the interior of the country. The necessary documents for the elections will not be sent in time.

"Since there is no mail service," he pointed out, "the papers needed for the election cannot be sent, and also the lack of telegraph communications makes it impossible to communicate with all electoral delegations."

Local observers feel that most of the workers not yet on strike will do so immediately after receiving their February wages, which the treasury started paying out yesterday.

In the meantime, the 1,000 workers of the Aguacapa hydroelectric complex, who are asking for higher wages from the Mexican Associated Civil Engineers [ingenieros civiles asociados--ica] continued to occupy the central park in Guatemala City after their 56-km march from Aguacapa camp.

Laugerud: Elections on Time

PA241242Y Paris AFP in Spanish 0204 GMT 24 Feb 78 PA

[Text] Guatemala City, 23 Feb (AFP)--Guatemalan President Kjell Laugerud Garcia said today that 1 or 20 strikes will not "stop the 5 March elections." The strike of government employees began today in post and telegraph offices, hospitals and public schools because the government had not agreed to the salary increase demands.

The Guatemalan people will elect a president, a vice president, 61 deputies and municipal officials in 360 districts on 5 March. The elections could be interrupted if the government strike continues, according to political observers, who pointed out that things could go as far as the military takeover of public services.

President Laugerud added that he is "the person most interested in relinquishing the presidency on 1 July of this year to the person elected on 5 March." He warned that during his meeting with the cabinet ministers this afternoon he could adopt emergency measures, including the dismissal of a large number of public employees who have broken the law.

It was learned that the judicial branch employees suspended work this afternoon until the government employees' salary increase demands are met. Judicial branch labor leaders appealed to all court employees throughout the country to respect the strike declared today. They said that the judicial employees will go to their jobs but will not attend to the public and will freeze the proceedings on all cases now underway.

Police Occupy Post Offices

PA241918Y San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1730 GMT 24 Feb 78 PA

[Text] Guatemalan police forces last night occupied post offices and telegraph offices, most of whose workers are on strike in demand of wage increases. The distribution of letters and cables is at a standstill. So far, the military takeover of the services has been ruled out.

The government workers strike has occurred only 10 days before the elections in Guatemala.

PRESIDENT ALLUDES TO POSSIBLE PARTITION OF BELIZE

PA250216Y Paris AFP in Spanish 0135 GMT 25 Feb 78 PA

[Text] Guatemala City, 24 Feb (AFP)--Guatemalan President Kjell Laugerud said today that his government wants the complete recovery of the territory of Belize, although he alluded to the possibility of an eventual partition.

The president said that formulas to resolve the Guatemalan-British dispute are currently being discussed. He said that if Belizean territory were eventually partitioned, the congress and the Council of State would form a national constituent assembly to reform the constitution. Nevertheless, he explained that any decision would be subject to the will of the Guatemalan people as expressed in a referendum.

In recent years the United Nations has urged a peaceful solution to the conflict, and Guatemala cannot remain outside that system, turning a deaf ear, Laugerud said.

REBEL ARMED FORCES ISSUE BULLETIN

PA241745Y Guatemala City EL IMPARCIAL in Spanish 16 Feb 78 pp 1-A, 8-A PA

[Text] A bulletin of the Rebel Armed Forces (FAR) which was surreptitiously brought to our offices today claims that Adrian Lopez Garcia and Jose Francisco Chavez Vasquez, who died in combat with the police on 7 February in the suburbs of the capital, were members of the clandestine group.

The bulletin states that "the members of the group are willing to die for the establishment of socialism, the first stage of communism."

In addition, the bulletin emphasizes that the two guerrillas first confronted five security officers, downing three of them while one of the guerrillas was killed. Subsequently, the other guerrilla held off over 500 special forces troops for close to 4 hours, killing 1 of them.

The bulletin concludes by calling for "the building of the Communist Party and the strengthening of the workers movement."

The document, dated 11 February, is entitled: "The Proletarian Cause (Expression of Revolutionary Workers)."

HONDURAS

ARMY HOLDING SANDINISTS CAPTURED ALONG BORDER

PA262203Y Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1901 GMT 26 Feb 78 PA

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 26 Feb (ACAN-EFE)--According to an armed forces communique issued here today, the Honduran Army is holding three members of the Nicaraguan Sandinist National Liberation Front captured on 14 February in Paraiso, a western department near the Nicaraguan border. The communique states that an army patrol captured the three men who identified themselves as active members of the Sandinist guerrilla movement.

The three are Oscar Benavides, Jose Alvaro Hernandez and Cisne Manuel Mairana.

The communique also states that Nicaraguan armed groups crossed into southern Honduras, killing Col Bernabe Corrales. However, it does not specify the date or whether the groups were captured.

The communique--apparently replying to criticism of the army because of alleged agreements between the Honduran and Nicaraguan governments aimed at controlling the Sandinists--says that patrols along the border are routine operations conducted "in fulfillment of the constitution." It adds that "these operations are not part of any agreements with foreign governments."

NICARAGUA

SOMOZA ADDRESSES NATIONALIST LIBERAL PARTY RALLY

PA262022Y Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 1555 GMT 26 Feb 78 PA

[Speech by Nicaraguan President Anastasio Somoza at Nationalist Liberal Party Rally in Managua on 26 February 1978--live]

[Excerpts] Radio listeners throughout the nation: On this solemn day of liberal faith, I look with admiration and joy upon this huge rally of thousands of partisans who are renewing their loyalty for our principles and expressing their support to the Nationalist Liberal Party [PLN]. As a result of historic circumstances and of constant popular support, the PLN continues to govern our fatherland, and I have the honor of being its leader. I want to state with heartfelt emotion that I appreciate this and that I, on behalf of all Nicaraguans, state my appreciation to the National Guard of Nicaragua, an institution [Somoza pauses, man shouts: "Long live the National Guard! Long live the Liberal Party!"] an institution made up of men who have truly popular roots and of courageous officers who have exemplary discipline, men who are loyal to the Nicaraguan people. [shouts of "Long live Somoza"]

Our army guarantees peace in the nation. Its soldiers have always been prepared to stop the terrorist forces of international communism without sparing any sacrifice. They have maintained and will continue to maintain the constitutional order, watching day and night over the security of all Nicaraguans and guaranteeing the free exercise of their individual rights as citizens. It is only just to recognize publicly that the PLN and the National Guard have cooperated with my government in an efficient manner to maintain peace in the nation.

History shows us that at the beginning of this century the reactionary forces of the Conservative Party forced the resignation of President Gen Jose Santos Zelaya, who, in an effort to calm passions and to prevent a civil war, stepped down so that the presidency of the republic could go to Dr Jose Madriz, an outstanding figure in PLN politics and an expression of the purest type of Nicaraguan republicanism. However, the Nicaraguan Conservative Party then intensified efforts to arouse passions, and fratricidal struggle became more acute. The Conservative Party then even committed treason, because this is what foreign intervention in Nicaragua represented. They did all this to overthrow the PLN.

This has always been the strategy and the political objective of the conservative adversaries we have in Nicaragua. They do not care if they provoke a civil war in Nicaragua. I must tell you that I do not care if I have to be left standing with a rifle on my shoulder. [words indistinct] On this occasion the conservative forces saw their political tactics crash against the unity and popular strength of our party. They also had to face the loyalty that the National Guard feels toward the constitution. [shouts of "Long live the National Guard," "Long live Somoza"]

They used the assassination of Dr Pedro Joaquin Chamorro as the starting point for their partisan strike. We are making efforts so that justice will be imparted fairly in Nicaragua. For this reason, we will not stop in our efforts to clarify completely the shameful crime against Dr Chamorro. [shouts], and so that there can be no doubt in this regard, we will support a commission made up of prominent and impartial citizens who will examine and analyze the criminal trial and, if necessary, will make whatever recommendations are necessary. Our goal is to have justice prevail in Nicaragua and to insure that justice is not clouded as a result of political passions or politicking. [shouts]

Those who tried to end the PLN's status as the governing party and asked the president of the republic to resign forgot that the PLN is in power because it has the support of the people and that the PLN remains in power because it has carried out revolutions in Nicaragua [words indistinct] the social and economic advances that the Nicaraguans need and have worked for. [shouts] I must remind Nicaraguans that I swore to comply faithfully with the precepts of our constitution. Consequently, I will firmly and with patriotic determination exercise the presidency of the republic until 1 May 1981. [shouts of "Long live Somoza"] On that day I will turn over the presidency to whatever Nicaraguan is popularly elected. On that day I will go home as just another liberal and will retire as chief of the armed forces so that in Nicaragua [words indistinct].

The strike initiated by some within the Nicaraguan enterprise sector and its happy end are more evidence that the Nicaraguan forces trying to subdue order, progress and law represent only a minority of the Nicaraguan people. No group, whether it rises up in arms or declares a strike, can break the republican vocation of this people.

I take this opportunity to announce to the nation that the PLN has to reorganize itself because it is the political party where the justified restlessness of young people will be satisfied in tune with their ideals. As chief of the PLN, I proclaim that we will carry out elections for convention delegates of the Liberal Party with the object of filling [interrupted by shouted slogans], elections with the object of filling the vacancies of convention delegates who have died and of increasing the number of convention delegates in fulfillment of Article 10 of our bylaws.

As chief of the Liberal Party, I have always been open to holding a dialog with all the sectors of the country. For this reason and in consideration of the fact that this is a peaceful way to solve differences of opinions between the various political groups, and also in order to allow a larger number of political groups to participate in state affairs, I will recommend to the members of the National Council who represent our glorious PLN that they take the initiative in the effort to amend partially all the pertinent articles of the constitution and the electoral law so that the doors may be opened to all political movements and so that these political movements may participate in future elections and in political activities as much as they want. [shouted slogans] In this fashion, this glorious party, a party which represents the essence of Nicaragua, which represents the popular roots of Nicaragua, will not continue to be prey to the reactionary conservatives who have blackmailed us to the extent of demanding from us 40 percent of the legislature and national representation. [shouted slogans]

I want to emphasize to all Nicaraguans, and especially to the businessmen and their workers and employees, that 1978 offers even more promising conditions for the Nicaraguan economy than conditions in 1977. Our exports will reach a record figure of almost \$700 million. The prices of our products--coffee, cotton, meat--continue to be attractive and will remain firm for the year 1979. During this year we will strengthen our balance of payments and will consolidate the [word indistinct] finances, insuring, as always and for the benefit of the workers themselves, the free convertibility of the cordoba at the rate of 7 to 1 (U.S. dollar), which is the guarantee of the stability of the Nicaraguan people. [shouted slogans]

Therefore, I invite all Nicaraguans to continue saving through the national financing system, which has the absolute support of the Central Bank's resources to attend to its obligations to savers and [word indistinct]. This system has the absolute support of an entire people who wish to live in peace and democracy. [shouts of "Somoza, Somoza"]

We have won the civic struggle; victory is ours. That is why we are here. Otherwise, we would be running through the hills. [shouts of "Somoza, Somoza"] The decisive participation of the people [words indistinct] allows us to announce here as fruit of this victory new social conquests which the revolutionary force of the Liberal Party has again attained without bloodshed. Here are the social reforms. Listen well, because this will be a night of celebration in all humble homes in Nicaragua, because if there was a celebration when Zelaya gave civil rights to women; if there was a celebration when Somoza gave social security to Nicaraguans, then, tonight, after this announcement, there will be celebration throughout the nation. [shouts of "Long live Somoza," "Long live the Liberal Party"]

The legislature is creating a fund which will guarantee land purchases so that small farmers may acquire agricultural (?land) backed by the guarantees of state financial institutions. We are guaranteeing [words indistinct] small urban enterprises.

I am proclaiming now that at the next session of the legislature we will present a bill on social security in the countryside and will make it a law. The PLN, which has the support and the arms of agricultural workers at its service, has the obligation to protect these workers and see to it that their families receive full medical attention and all of their social security benefits. This will provide them with a better life and will allow them greater participation in the affairs of the fatherland in accordance with the nation's economic capacity. Gentlemen, the campaign promises will become a reality in 1978. [shouts of "Long live Nicaragua's peasants," "Long live Somoza"]

Family protection will be extended to include the wives or mates of all workers or members of the National Guard so that [shouts of "Long live the National Guard," "Long live Somoza,"] so that all their illnesses and those of their children may be covered by either the social security or the complementary medical insurance contracted by their employers.

And those who turned their [words indistinct] as a sign of protest--who are mostly members of the strong economic groups--should now extend the social security service to domestic workers. [shouts of "Long live Somoza," "Long live the Liberal Party," "Long live the National Guard," "Somoza, Somoza"]

Gentlemen, you have been so efficient in protesting that we are now giving domestic workers a social revolution. Aside from proof of their fiscal solvency, we will now demand that employers present proof of having paid all of their workers' health, housing, education and salary benefits as well as their employers' taxes [cotizacion patronal] as a prerequisite to obtain financing. There can be no financing for the person who does not finance the working (?father). [shouts of "Long live Somoza," "Long live the Liberal Party," "Somoza, Somoza"]

Aware of the fact that a (?liberal) society should strengthen those organizations that contribute to the process of improvement and to a better distribution of the national wealth and that are loyal to our party's ideology, which has always proclaimed the freedom of labor union associations, I will submit to congress a bill on labor union associations so that only the will of the workers of an enterprise will be necessary for the creation of a labor union and so that they will be accepted and respected without the need for interaction with or approval and tutelage from the state as it is established at present in our labor code; that is to say, there will be free and democratic labor unions in Nicaragua. [shouts of "Long live Somoza," "Long live the Liberal Party," "Somoza, Somoza," "Long live the National Guard"]

I will submit [a bill] at the next session of the legislature and we will (?promulgate) the civil service law guaranteeing job stability to public employees. In other words, state workers will be guaranteed steady jobs from which they cannot be dismissed for unjustified reasons. [Words indistinct] the principles of the Nationalist Liberal Party.

We will make mandatory the payment of the 1-month Christmas bonus for all workers. [shouts of "Long live Somoza," "Long live the Liberal Party"]

This payment will be in addition to the payment of yearly proportional vacations [words indistinct]. Liberalism has the obligation to distribute the national wealth. Furthermore, workers should receive the benefits of their continuous contributions in accordance with the law instead of as gifts given at their employers' will. [shouts of "Long live the liberal youth," "Long live Somoza"]

Nicaraguans, the test that the government and the Nationalist Liberal Party has just undergone with the strikers' attempt to overthrow this government can be compared only to the time when these same reactionary and conservative forces opposed the establishment of the labor code in 1944 and the social security system in 1958. This time they sought to overthrow the legally constituted government. They did not oppose any social reform. For this reason, I have [words indistinct] and (?I am now proposing to you) [shouts of "Long live Somoza," "Long live the Liberal Party"] and I am now proposing that the victory (?be regarded as that of) the working class. That way, gentlemen, we will be acting in accordance with our liberal principles,

Today, more than ever, we must be alert to defend our liberal principles because the reactionary conservatives and the communists are trying to waylay us and deprive us of our freedom. Let us not fear those campaigns that pretend to defend human rights because long before the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man were proclaimed at the United Nations, liberalism was the precursor and defender of those human rights.

We Nicaraguans are not being taught anything by those who have traditionally beat up blacks [indistinct shouts], by those who regard Indians as second-class citizens.

I am asking all Nicaraguans to give me their support so I can put into effect all these social laws that will not benefit Anastasio Somoza Debayle, but the unrecognized workers. (It will be they) who will benefit from this initiative of liberalism and its (followers).

I know you have come from distant parts of Nicaragua. I know it took some of you 8 hours to come from La Cruz de Rio Grande through the interoceanic canal. I know there are others among you who came from Puerto Cabezas, Nueva [name indistinct] and [name indistinct]. I want you to take a message of security back to your homes. Again, I repeat: Nothing will happen in Nicaragua because the people want peace and liberals [words indistinct] the people. [shouts of "Long live Somoza," "Long live the Liberal Party," "Long live the National Guard"]

SOMOZA SAYS GOVERNMENT STRONGER THAN EVER

PA241702Y Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1350 GMT 24 Feb 78 PA

[By Francisco Rubiales]

[Text] Managua, 24 Feb (ACAN-EFE)--Nicaraguan President Gen Anastasio Somoza Debayle said today that he feels his government is stronger than ever following the recent crisis which shook the country. He added that next Sunday the opposition will be completely defeated. On that day, Somoza plans to gather over 200,000 persons in the streets of Managua in support of his government.

Smiling, optimistic, with many fewer kilos of weight and a healthy appearance, President Somoza, the last member of a family which has been in power for over 40 years, said that at no time did he feel cornered or powerless during the strike carried out by private enterprise and the armed attacks by the opposition. "The National Guard is weary because of the amount of work it has had recently, but it is solidly united. Not one soldier has protested since the conflicts started," President Somoza told ACAN-EFE in an exclusive interview.

Asked about the foundation of his power and the reason of his strength as president of Nicaragua, Somoza said: "You are going to laugh at me if I tell you; it is because of good government."

He gave some figures: "My government finished building 50,000 houses for the people of Managua. It has taken care of 95 percent of the sewage system, 98 percent of electric power supply in Managua and 80 percent in the rural areas. These are important activities in politics. Only a political novice would dare overthrow a government which has accomplished that much. We have founded a popular bank and other things for the people.

Somoza believes that his government is popular. Asked if he will run for reelection in 1981, he said: "The constitution forbids the reelection of a president. I think that answers your question."

"If the opposition had won its battle against you, if the strike had caused your downfall, who would be in power at this moment, the conservatives or the Sandinists?"

"Neither. The Nationalist Liberal Party would be in power," Somoza said. This is the official party.

He categorically denied the existence of foreign mercenaries in his country. He termed as false the news disseminated by the Sandinist guerrillas that it had recently killed a foreigner in the mountains.

He does not know who the brains are behind the assassination of opposition newsman Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, whose death on 10 January in a Managua street unleashed a series of chain reactions against Somoza's regime.

General Somoza, who many said would fall when the opposition tried to overthrow him, told ACAN-EFE that the presidents of Central America supported him during the crisis and that he had received clear demonstrations of their support, without exception. However, he regretted that this support is not effective in fighting the coffee disease which could wipe out coffee plantations in Central America.

Somoza added that for years he has been trying to get support from the Central American countries in the fight against the outbreak of the coffee disease in Nicaragua, which is threatening to spread to other countries. He said that his efforts have been useless. Recently, it was said that Nicaragua had given up the extremely expensive struggle against the coffee plant disease because the other Central American countries were not cooperating in the struggle against this disease, which could affect them all.

Finally, Somoza said that he is in favor of Central American economic integration, which he said was an irreversible path. He gave as solutions to the current setbacks in the integration movement more talks among the Central American presidents and solidarity among their countries.

CONTINUED VIOLENCE, FIRES, DEMONSTRATIONS REPORTED

Disturbances in Diriamba

PA262352V Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 2304 GMT 26 Feb 78 PA

[Text] Managua, 26 Feb (LATIN)--Serious disorders which resulted in the burning of several cars and at least two houses and armed clashes between demonstrators and the National Guard broke out this afternoon in Diriamba. They occurred a short time after the end of a Liberal rally in Managua where President Somoza had announced important political and social reforms. According to eyewitness reports, street demonstrations against the Liberal regime began in the morning in Diriamba, 36 km south of Managua.

According to the same sources, the violence intensified as the demonstrators began to attack minibuses and other vehicles taking Liberal demonstrators to Managua. Later, a group of demonstrators attacked a store from which they took several firearms. They also set fire to several houses owned by Somoza supporters. At least two of the houses were burned, according to firemen.

Armed demonstrators took over the Torro del Reloj, the high point of the city, where they confronted the National Guard patrols which were sent from Jinotepe as reinforcements. So far there have been no reports of dead or wounded.

2 Civilians, Guardsman Killed

PA270323Y Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0130 GMT 27 Feb 78 PA

[Excerpt] Managua, 26 Feb (ACAN-EFE)--Two civilians were killed and seven injured, and apparently one National Guardsman was also killed, as the result of an armed clash in Diriamba this afternoon. Diriamba lies 45 km south of Managua. Preliminary reports state that after an antigovernment demonstration the crowd attacked the arms store owned by Alfredo Gonzalez Hollman. Unidentified individuals took 30 30-30 rifles, 12 magnum pistols and 5 Remington rifles from the store. The demonstrators used the arms to make a stand and attacked the electric power company owned by Carlos Moises Baltodano, vice minister of economic integration, and put it out of commission.

The Cornelio Hueck (name of the national congress president) business school and the home of Liberal Deputy Nubia Hernandez de Pomar were also attacked. The deputy's car was burned. Nicaraguan Army troops were supported by planes and helicopters which flew over the city and attacked the rebels.

Managua Suburbs, Masaya

PA270325Y Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1612 GMT 26 Feb 78 PA

[Text] Managua, 26 Feb (ACAN-EFE)--Demonstrators committed acts of sabotage and set fires in Managua and took over the fire station in Masaya last night and before dawn today as the resistance to Gen Anastasio Somoza's government continued. In Managua unidentified individuals even tried to set fire to the Catholic Church in the Cristo del Rosario suburb with Molotov cocktails yesterday, but firemen extinguished the blaze in time. Nevertheless, in the same suburb a car owned by a government supporter was burned yesterday afternoon.

The El Bailongo bar-resaturant in Bello Horizonte suburb was set afire last night. The fire started in a theater which was showing the movie "Three Loves," and had to be evacuated as a precautionary measure. A large crowd gathered at the scene of the fire. This brought out military patrols of the special brigade against terrorist actions, which used tear gas to disperse the crowd. While the bar-restaurant burned to the ground, a military helicopter with powerful searchlights guarded various sectors of the city.

In Veracruz suburb, northwestern Managua, the demonstrators burned a car owned by Teresa de Romero, a government supporter. In Altagracia suburb demonstrators tried to burn a city bus, but firemen doused the flames in time.

In Masaya, 30 km east of Managua, antigovernment demonstrators set fire to the Guadalajara theater for the third time, but firemen saved it again. The theater was partially destroyed with Molotov cocktails on two previous occasions. Yesterday afternoon, participants in the funeral for Francisco Lopez Diaz, who died in street disturbances in Monimbo district of Masaya, temporarily took over the fire station. The demonstrators evicted the firemen, sounded the sirens of the firetrucks, and set the Nicaraguan flag (blue and white) at half-mast as a sign of mourning for the dead demonstrator. After this, Lopez Diaz' mourners gave up the fire station without damaging it.

Also in Masaya--the scene of violent incidents in the last few days--unidentified individuals also set fire to the Perla bar-restaurant owned by a National Guard officer. Demonstrators broke into the departmental public education inspectorate, hauled all of its contents into the street and set it afire.

RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ COMMENTS ON AID TO AFRICANS

LD261140Y London OBSERVER in English 26 Feb 78 p 14 LD

[Interview granted to Hugh O'Shaughnessy by Cuban Vice President Carlos Rafael Rodriguez: "Castro's Long March to Pretoria"]

[Text] Cuban foot patrols in the streets of Johannesburg, Cuban artillery dug in on Table Mountain--the possibility of Cuban troops some day coming to the aid of a beleaguered black government in South Africa is a distant but by no means fanciful scenario as far as Havana is concerned. It is one the Cuban Government has clearly given careful thought to.

"If there were a black government, legally constituted, and if it were recognised by the Africans, and if a white minority were aiming to start a guerrilla war against it, well then, it would be time to discuss it."

Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, vice-president of Cuba, gently discourages speculation about events on the far horizon. "There are six, seven or eight ifs. Like Kipling's poem...."

He prefers to talk about the present, his recent talks with leaders of the African National Congress. "It's going to be a long and difficult struggle, but the new thing about it is that there is an evident uprising by the black people. And once that starts, it's very difficult to contain."

Dr Rodriguez receives visitors at his office in the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party, a modern building guarded by sentries with bayonets, a few hundred yards from the Plaza de la Revolucion, where Fidel Castro periodically calls together the masses. The lifts are silent, the corridors are hushed, white and gleaming, decorated with discreet lithographs and immaculately manicured palm plants in pots.

In the streets, the Cuban Army, 110,000 strong and reputedly the best in Latin America, is more visible than it has ever been since Dr Castro came to power in 1959. All day long Russian-made trucks and jeeps, white markings picked out on khaki, thread their way through the traffic in the centre of the city. Off-duty soldiers, sometimes with an arm round a khaki-clad girl friend from one of the women's services, are seen at the bus stops and in the snack bars as never before.

Dr Rodriguez, bearded, bespectacled and outwardly affable, is a man of consummate political gifts. An orthodox communist long before Fidel Castro's revolution, he was at one time a minister under the right-wing dictator General Batista--when Batista and the communists were in a tactical alliance--and an outspoken critic of the guerrilla exploits of Castro and his "adventurers."

But he joined the Castro forces in the mountains of the Sierra Maestra and is now third in hierarchy, after Fidel himself and his brother Raul, Cuba's military boss; he is the foremost international strategist in the Cuban leadership. Talking to me about Cuban attitudes to Africa, he made it plain that Havana is thinking in terms of a commitment far beyond the present conflicts raging in the Horn of Africa.

It all started, he said, in 1959. As soon as Dr Castro came to power, links were forged with African anti-colonialist movements, in the first instance those fighting the Portuguese. Then, after the death of Patrice Lumumba, Cuba became closely involved in newly-independent Congo (now Zaire). The roots go deep.

But he makes a sharp distinction. While anti-colonial forces have certainly been given aid in the form of training of guerrilla forces or of the direct participation of volunteers, he insists that Cuban troops, as such, have been sent only at the express wish of a legally constituted and widely recognised government in order to help it to defend its territory.

There have been Western jibes that Havana's troops are merely Moscow's mercenaries, and when I remarked that in sending forces to Africa, there must surely be some coordination with the Soviet Union, Dr Rodriguez showed himself sensitive to the point.

"Look, it's obvious that we have a close relationship with the Russians. But when we first sent troops to Angola we did not rely on a possible Soviet participation in the operation. We started it in a risky, almost improbable fashion, with a group of people packed in a ship and in those British Britannia aircraft of ours."

Eventually, the operation was coordinated with Russians, who were beginning to send military supplies to help President Agostinho's MPLA government in Angola. "But," he insisted, "the thing started off as a purely Cuban operation."

He went further, implicitly reserving Cuba's right to act on her own initiative in Africa in the future. "When one talks of help to Zimbabwe, Namibia and the other national liberation movements we are assisting, you can't always say there's perfect coordination.

"Cuba will go on giving the African liberation movements the help they need, with or without coordination with other countries. It will be according to what we decide."

So there are Cuban troops in Ethiopia? What there are, he says, picking his words carefully, are Cuban specialists who are helping the Ethiopians to use the different types of military equipment, Western and communist, in what is defensive war against a Somali invasion. Cuban specialists are at the disposal of Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam, head of Ethiopia's military regime, the Dergue.

Would Col. Mengistu therefore be a liberty to use these specialists later on against the Eritrean rebels? No, he replied, Mengistu had no authority to use Cuban aid to put down by force the Eritrean rebellion.

"We helped the Eritreans in their fight for self-determination from the time of Haile Selassie onward. We felt that there has to be some political solution to the Eritrean problem and that there have got to be talks between the Eritreans and the central government. But Eritrea is an internal problem of the Ethiopian revolution."

On Rhodesia, Dr Rodriguez said that although he was intensely pessimistic about the possibility of a peaceful transition to majority rule, he did not quite despair. "We will give the Patriotic Front all the help they need, just as we helped the MPLA before it became the Government of Angola.

"If the revolutionaries still see a possibility, even a distant possibility, of a peaceful solution, we will respect their point of view. But in our in-most hearts it seems to us that the possibility of peace is more and more remote; while Smith is still leading the white minority, the possibility seems virtually impossible."

If there is no peace for a black-ruled Zimbabwe, no one can doubt that the Cubans will help the African guerrillas, and that Havana will do its best to help the emergence of a Marxist-Leninist government in Salisbury that will have much in common with those now ruling in Angola and Mozambique.

But time and again Dr Rodriguez claimed that Cuban military assistance to Africa could only be secondary to the efforts of the Africans themselves. "Revolution can't be exported or imported. It's up to the movements themselves."

Afterwards I reflected on the impossible task of trying to judge what proportion of Cuba's 9-1/2 million people accept and embrace Dr Rodriguez's precise revolutionary logic. On one side there are clearly many convinced supporters of Dr Castro's brand of Marxism-Leninism and Cuban nationalism--who believe that there are few more worthy causes than to fight in Angola or Ethiopia against the reactionaries and the imperialists.

Government officials point out that many Cubans, now in their twenties, feel that their country's actions in Africa give them the chance to gain the spurs they were too young to win when Castro was still a guerrilla in the Sierra Maestra. In a country itself half black, many descendants of slaves will feel an instinctive sympathy for the African liberation movements.

But there are families--we don't know how many--who are today mourning their son, husband or brothers who have died in some distant African bush. It is not easy in Cuba to discover whether the militants outnumber the complainers and the mourners or vice versa.

In the bar of the hotel I met an old acquaintance, a young black government official. "The thing about Cuba is that it is not really a Latin American country. With our racial heritage, our music, our dance and our old religions, we are really Afro-Americans."

MEDICAL MISSION TO CONTINUE WORK IN ANGOLA

PA252246Y Havana International Service in Spanish 1800 GMT 25 Feb 78 PA

[Text] The Cuban health workers who are providing internationalist assistance in Angola have reaffirmed their decision to continue cooperating with the government on that African country in rendering their public service. That statement was made at a general assembly of the Cuban medical contingent which analyzed the assistance provided in the health field during 1977. During that period about 1.5 million Angolans received outpatient services from special personnel from our country. According to available statistics, this figure is almost the equivalent of the number of consultations held by all of the doctors in Angola in 1973, the last year of Portugal's colonial administration.

Dr Ferreira Neto, director of the Angolan Public Health Ministry, gave out certificates to several members of the Cuban medical mission, acknowledging their years of help to that sister African nation. For his part, Santiago Gonzalez, a member of the Cuban civilian mission and the PCC's bureau [buro], said at the meeting that Angola and Cuba's joint effort last year resulted in important successes in the struggle against polio, cholera and other diseases. Cuban medical teams operate in over 32 Angolan hospitals and have actively participated in massive vaccination campaigns to immunize over 2 million persons. Other specialists have been helping to train 1,800 Angolan health technicians.

RAUL CASTRO BIDS FAREWELL TO AIR MARSHAL YEFIMOV

FL252345Y Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 2244 GMT 25 Feb 78 FL

[Excerpt] At Jose Marti International Airport Army Gen Raul Castro, second secretary of the PCC Central Committee and minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces [FAR], today bade farewell to Air Marshal Aleksandr Yefimov, first deputy commander in chief of the USSR Air Forces and twice Hero of the Soviet Union. Marshal Yefimov headed his country's delegation to the commemorative activities marking the 60th anniversary of the Soviet Armed Forces. Others present at Havana's air terminal to bid farewell to the visitors were Vilma Espin, president of the Federation of Cuban Women, and Vice Adm Aldo Santamaria, vice minister-chief of the Revolutionary Navy, both members of the PCC Central Committee; Division Gen Francisco Cabrera, vice minister-chief of the Antiaircraft Defense and Revolutionary Air Force; USSR Ambassador to Cuba Nikita Tolubeyev, and other personalities.

GDR-CUBA JOINT COMMITTEE TALKS BEGIN IN HAVANA

LD252336Y East Berlin ADN International Service in German 1855 GMT 25 Feb 78 LD

[Text] --The eighth meeting of the GDR-Cuban joint committee for economic and scientific-technical cooperation opened in Havana on Saturday. The GDR Government delegation headed by Dr Gerhard Weiss, deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, was welcomed upon its arrival in Cuba by Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, vice chairman of the Council of State and of the Council of Ministers of Cuba.

The meeting is dealing with questions of further deepening the economic and scientific-technological relations between the two countries.

RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ MEETS WITH PLO DELEGATION

FL240027Y Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 25 Feb 78 FL

[Text] Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, member of the PCC Politburo and vice president of the councils of state and ministers, today received the delegation headed by (?Abu Jihad), member of Fatah Revolutionary Council, chief of its foreign relations department and member of the PLO Central Council.

Carlos Rafael reiterated the solidarity of the PCC, government and Cuban people with the fraternal Palestinian people. The PLO official referred to the current status of the Palestinian liberation struggle. The two sides also exchanged viewpoints on the political situation in the Middle East.

FIDEL CASTRO CHAIRS SUGAR HARVEST MEETING

FL251645Y Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1145 GMT 25 Feb 78 FL

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, first secretary of the PCC Central Committee and president of the Council of State, has chaired a meeting held to examine the status of the current sugar harvest and activities of cane agriculture. Different measures aimed at guaranteeing the fulfillment of plans assigned to the respective provinces were adopted during the meeting.

In his closing remarks, the PCC first secretary pointed out the need for making an extraordinary and sustained effort during the next 100 days. Likewise, he exhorted all to overcome all difficulties and to raise the level of agroindustrial efficiency with the same spirit with which our nation's men and women fulfill internationalist missions.

Participating in the meeting on the sugar harvest were members of the PCC Politburo, vice presidents of the Council of Ministers, ministers, provincial committee first secretaries and other party leaders. Others present were leaders of the Union of Young Communists and mass organizations and national and provincial administrative officials.

GRANMA ACCUSES U.S. OF COVERUP IN LETELIER ASSASSINATION

PA252017Y Havana International Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 25 Feb 78 PA

[Text] GRANMA, the organ of the Communist Party of Cuba, describes as a "belated suspicion" the fact that the United States waited 1 year and 5 months before requesting the Chilean military junta to interrogate two Chilean military officers linked to the assassination in Washington of Orlando Letelier, former Chilean foreign minister.

GRANMA said that the involvement of the Chilean military officers, Juan Williams Rose and Alejandro Romeral Jara, has been known to the U.S. authorities ever since the days following the assassination. For 17 months, the Cuban paper says, the U.S. Justice Department and the FBI kept the investigations at a standstill in an attitude of open concealment of the material and intellectual perpetrators of this criminal act.

On the other hand, Chilean radio stations monitored in Buenos Aires revealed that four men and one woman were arrested in Santiago by the fascist authorities, who accused them of placing bombs in various parts of the capital. Those arrested were identified by the national information center as a political-military group of the clandestine Movement of the Revolutionary Left, MIR.

Meanwhile, a rally held in Berlin by the German free youth turned into a demonstration of solidarity with the Chilean people. Luis Corvalan, secretary general of the Chilean Communist Party, was present at the rally.

MALMIERCA REPORTS ON MEXICAN, JAMAICAN TRIPS

PA241936Y Havana International Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 24 Feb 78 PA

[Excerpt] Cuban Foreign Minister Isidoro Malmierca has said that his recent trips to Mexico and Jamaica were very positive and will strengthen cooperation plans and the bonds of friendship uniting our peoples. In an interview published in GRANMA's weekly summary, Malmierca said that the talks and work sessions held with the Mexican foreign minister and other high-level government officials reflected an atmosphere of respect and understanding which is an example of the close ties, cooperation and friendship between countries which, like Cuba and Mexico, have different economic and social systems.

The Cuban foreign minister added that Mexico has shown interest in the preparations for the sixth summit conference of nonaligned nations to be held in Havana in 1979, an event which Mexico will attend as an observer. Malmierca also emphasized the Mexican people's respect and admiration for our revolution and its maximum leader, Fidel Castro, noting that the governments of both nations are optimistic about the results which may be obtained if work is continued as enthusiastically and seriously as in the past few years during which Cuban-Mexican relations have reached an unprecedented level.

He also spoke of the highly satisfactory results of his trip to Jamaica and, in particular, his meeting with Jamaican Prime Minister Michael Manley and other Jamaican Government officials with whom he discussed international political problems, bilateral cooperation and the strengthening of the bonds of friendship which unite our peoples.

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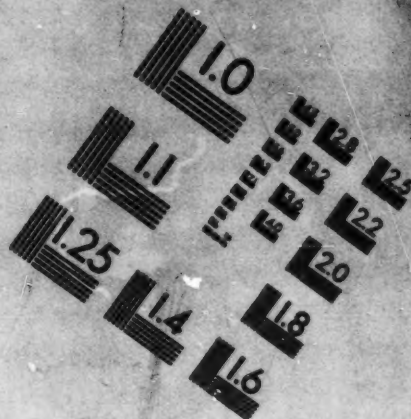
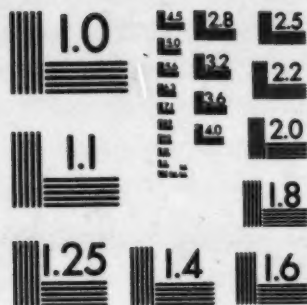


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